The Ghost Goes Left—By ROBERT FORSYTHE

MAY 12, 1936

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New Masses

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By ALTER BRODY

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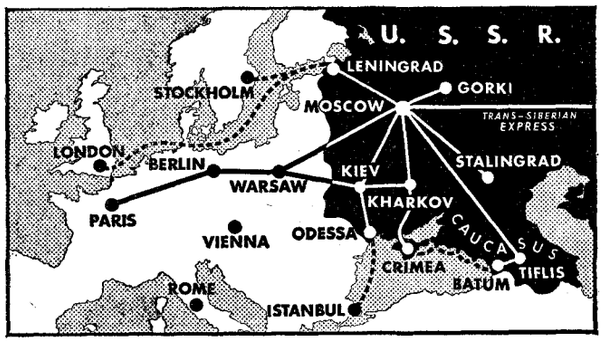

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New Masses

MAY 12, 1936

Healing the Breach

ON Jefferson Day, the President made his usual sweet promises to the Forgotten Man. Several days later, the U. S. Chamber of Commerce met in Washington and Secretary of Commerce Roper, New Deal spokesman, went to the convention to have a serious talk with the boys. He offered Big Business the support and cooperation of the Roosevelt regime and Big Business responded with a set of reactionary demands.

The Chamber of Commerce wants no laws regulating the maximum number of hours which Big Business may demand from its employes, or the minimum wages it may pay. Working conditions are not to be specified even in government "terms of employment," that is, no laws which guarantee labor's right to organize. Moreover, the Chamber wants no government provisions for unemployment and old-age insurance. In case Congress, under pressure from the people, passes such laws, the Supreme Court shall have full authority to void them.

Big Business does not conceal its reactionary aims, and Secretary Roper's offer of support and cooperation indicates that the New Deal will make a number of concessions to these aims.

As the elections approach, Roosevelt hastens to lessen the breach between his administration and the more reactionary industrialists. Under these circumstances, labor leaders like Lewis, Dubinsky and Antonini who urge labor to vote for Roosevelt, instead of taking independent political action, are doing labor a serious disservice. A vote for Roosevelt in this election will be, more than ever, a vote for Big Business.

Fascism Hires Prof. Carver

DURING an Irish famine, Dean Swift proposed that mothers eat their children. That was irony. Today fascism has converted the most savage fantasies of the ironic imagination into sinister fact.

During his career as economics professor at Harvard, Thomas Nixon Carver was never distinguished either for erudition or insight. And so the Republican-Liberty-League-Hearst gang has hired him as a professional thinker. The good doctor has earned his salary with his first contribution, an 84-page booklet entitled *What Must We Do To Save Our Economic System?* However, this profound work, now circulating privately among leading business men, is not the product of Dr. Carver's monumental intellect alone. His fascist program, drawn up with the collaboration of a group of California bankers, utility officials and business executives, pays continuous and unstinted tribute to Hitler, Mussolini and imperialist Japan.

Convinced that capitalism cannot give work or food to the workers and large sections of the middle class, Dr. Carver proposes the drastic curtailment of unemployment relief; the sterilization of the "palpably unfit"; the limitation of families by birth control; the restriction of marriage to those who can afford to buy and maintain an automobile; the exclusion of all immigrants in order to reduce the "oversupply" of labor; and the elimination of governmental restraint on business. To achieve these ends, he urges the organization of the propertied class into a new political party.

A section of American big business puts forward Carver's program with a monstrous seriousness, and cites Hitler and Mussolini as demonstration that their "program" can work. The program is

MOTHERS' DAY — *Mackey*

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filled with the nightmares and megalomanias typical of fascism—the hatred and fear of the workers, the intellectuals, the unemployed, the Communists, the Soviet Union. These would remain nightmares and megalomanias if they were confined to the fantasy of a few crackpots like Professor Carver. But supported by the Republican-Liberty-League-Hearst gang, they become a grave danger to the American people.

Jim-Crow Librarians

AT A time when a new lynch wave has hit the South, it is shocking to learn that the American Library Association, holding its annual conference at Richmond, Virginia, this month will bar Negro librarians from some of its sessions, and will segregate them in Jim-Crow fashion at all other sessions. The meetings and round-table discussions from which the Negro librarians will be barred are those at which food will be served. At open meetings they will be allowed to sit only in a special section of the auditorium.

The editor of The Wilson Bulletin for Librarians has protested against this "shockingly cruel and feudal policy," and has urged librarians to take some decisive action against it during the Richmond conference which will last from May 11 to May 16.

Naval Race

CONGRESSMAN Marcantonio spoke the simple truth when he declared on the floor of the House last Friday that "we are shooting off the pistol that will start a world naval race." The approval of the largest peace-time naval bill in American history means nothing less than that. Already the British Admiralty has announced its building program under the new rearmament scheme. Britain will spend about $400,000,000 on thirty warships, on the Singapore naval base, on "precautionary" measures in the Mediterranean, where Italy is especially strong. And now the House of Representatives has voted $531,068,707 for twenty warships, including two battleships.

While England will concentrate on the Mediterranean, the United States will pay special attention to the Pacific. The proposed new treaty with Panama seeks to revise the Canal Zone defenses which will be strengthened at a cost of about $5,000,000 a year over a five-year period. Plans are under way for a considerable strengthening of Hawaii as a naval base. And after December 31, there will be no legal bars to strengthening the fortifications in the Philippines, to establishing naval bases and fortifications in Guam, the Aleutian Islands or Samoa, and possibly submarine and naval air bases at Wake, Midway and other small Pacific islands.

The naval bill passed last week is indeed a "pistol shot." It is the first step in American imperialism's vast armament program. But once this country begins to fill the Pacific with battleships and airplanes and naval bases, Great Britain will be free to strengthen Hongkong. And Japan's hands will be untied for building docks and placing guns in the Kuriles, with an eye on the Aleutian Islands, and in Formosa and the Pescadores, near the Philippines.

A naval race will be on, far more formidable than the one which led to the first world war. The United States, Congressman Marcantonio argued, "is arming for an imperialistic war" at the expense of the workers and middle-class groups who pay for armaments in taxes and in relief cuts. The American people have a right to know against whom the government is arming. They have every reason for demanding that the money being spent on armaments should be used instead for relieving the unemployed, for building schools, for W.P.A. projects.

The Artists Again

ON Friday, May 7, elected delegates representing more than 5,000 artists from the eastern states will convene at the Grand Ball Room of the Hotel New Yorker in the first of a series of regional conventions leading to the establishment of a National Artists Union. In the face of the questions that are being hurled at any and all candidates in the forthcoming presidential election regarding relief and P.W.A. projects, the artists, noted for their militancy and progressive actions in the past, will attempt to deal with the cultural and economic problems of the artists, *on a trade-union basis*.

One of the chief topics of discussion at the convention will be the Federal Art Projects, and the appropriate program of action to insure their continuation and extension on a national scale with trade-union wages and conditions. The program will also include a full discussion of the public use of art in public buildings and the teaching of art to millions of children and adults by artists. Prominent among those who are active in the interests of organization among white-collar groups who will address meetings at the convention are Francis Gorman on the Farmer-Labor Party, Elmer Rice, David Freed, Meyer Schapiro, Stuart Davis, secretary of the American Artists Congress; Phil Bard of the New York Artists Union, and George Biddle, prominent mural painter.

THE NEW MASSES greets this convention as a most important step in the struggles of white-collar professionals.

Spain's Anti-Fascist President

AS WE go to press, Miguel Azana, Republican leader, seems assured of election to the presidency of Spain. He has the backing of the People's Bloc representatives who form the overwhelming majority among the electors and deputies who will name the new president. The United Front of Communists and Socialists would undoubtedly have preferred a more resolute anti-fascist than Azana for the presidency. But the substitution of Azana for the clerical-minded Alcala Zamora will not be opposed by the workers since it does constitute a forward move in the democratization of Spanish government.

Declarations made by Azana in a recent interview with Ilya Ehrenbourg, the Soviet press representative, lend special significance to his election as President. "The U.S.S.R.," said Azana, "is the guarantor of peace. Your country possesses military power and is therefore able to defend our common ideals. Fascism is the germ of war."

Spanish anti-fascists are intent upon following up the removal of Zamora by placing the reactionary chieftain Gil Robles before a revolutionary tribunal. The Communist members in the Cortes have been urging that this be done in compliance with the People's Bloc electoral program which under the heading of "responsibilities" called for the punishment of those who instigated the barbaric repression of October, 1934. The working class attitude toward Gil Robles was demonstrated during a speech made by him in the Cortes on April 15. After a covert threat of a counter-revolutionary armed coup, the fascist leader announced to the Cortes that he was ready to die in the street

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rather than submit to the Revolution. The Communist Deputy Jose Diaz interjected, "I do not know how Senor Robles will die." "On the gallows," another deputy volunteered. A popular tribunal would at least remove Senor Robles from the halls of the Cortes to the Model Prison of Madrid.

Industrial Unionism Gains

AT THE steel and automobile conventions which opened last week, the advocates of industrial unionism made singular gains over those who have been clinging to the principles of craft unionism and class collaboration. Mike Tighe's control of the American Association of Iron, Steel and Tinplate Workers was successfully challenged at Canonsburg, Pennsylvania. Support of an organizational drive in the steel industry based on the principle of industrial unionism has thus far been the salient feature of the convention. It is likely that a favorable report will be returned by the committee selected to make recommendations on the proposals of the Committee for Industrial Organization for whom John Brophy acted as spokesman. Acceptance of these proposals and the half-million dollar organizational fund that goes with them, will clear the road for the Amalgamated Association among the four hundred thousand steel workers in America's most decisive industry.

In South Bend, Indiana, delegates to the United Automobile Workers convention repudiated the policies of officials appointed by William Green. They elected progressive executive officers pledged to extend union activities in the principal centers of the industry. At the same time, despite a majority report, the convention refused to endorse Roosevelt in the coming elections. Instead, the delegates approved and promised to back the immediate formation of a national Farmer-Labor Party.

The achievements at the steel and auto conventions emphasize the recent progressive trend in the American labor movement. They follow directly upon the victory of rubber workers in Akron against the open shoppers in the industry, a victory obtained with the assistance of the Committee for Industrial Unionism. The trend is evident in the sweeping defeat by the longshoremen on the West Coast of the Waterfront Employers Association, in the seamen's strike on the Atlantic. Progressive unionism is definitely penetrating the basic and most highly trustified industries. Success will not only benefit millions of workers employed in these industries; it will constitute the best defense against the fascist overlords of industrial America.

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Women's Peace Day

BUSINESS can convert the finest human sentiments into a racket. The love which men have for their mothers has been exploited by the manufacturers of candy, flowers, clothes for pushing trade on Mothers' Day. Last year, however, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom of New York proposed that Mothers' Day should be changed to Women's Peace Day. This idea has now been taken up by the Women's Committee of the American League Against War and Fascism, and there is every indication that thousands of women will henceforth give May 10 real meaning. Surely, there is no better way to honor mothers than to join with them on this day in resisting the onrush of war, the final curse which capitalism inflicts on motherhood.

Theory of Flight

LUCIA GAMBRINO, 30, Genoa seamstress, had long been out of work, saw no prospects of ever earning a living in fascist Italy. Far off was America, legendary land of salvation. Lucia did not know we have 13,000,000 unemployed, that many Americans live on dog food. She stowed away on the American Export Liner Exochordia, was caught in mid-ocean. The laws of capitalist profit are inexorable. The Exochordia's officers might have had the decency to land in New York before returning Lucia to Italy. Instead they halted the ship on the high seas, transferred the refugee to the Exeter, quarter-mile away, bound for Genoa. The transfer was made in drizzling rain. Lucia tried to throw herself into the tossing waves, was saved by the officers manning the motor boat in which she was transferred from one ship to the other. "Now what am I to do?" she cried to her rescuers. "I would rather die than go back." That is how Italian workers feel about Mussolini's paradise.

New Heidelberg

SHOULD American colleges participate in the Nazi celebration of the Heidelberg University Jubilee in June? The Federal Bar Association put this question squarely before the heads of America's leading institutions of higher learning, and received some illuminating answers. The general consensus of the educators was against American participation in the Nazi fes-

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tival. According to the report of the Committee on Education of the Federal Bar Association, American college heads gave the following reasons for declining to participate:

(1) Academic freedom is dead in Germany;

(2) scientific progress is in a state of demoralization and disintegration;

(3) this deterioration has affected every aspect of German life;

(4) appeals to Germany for enlightenment and liberty remain unheeded, and tyranny continues to masquerade under the mask of law;

(5) the Nazi government works more and more by coercion and less and less by consent.

Heidelberg was undoubtedly one of the great universities of Europe and the world. American scholarship owes a great debt to that former home of the sciences. Today the students of Heidelberg are taught to hate Jews, to be obedient soldiers and to glorify war as man's highest art. Of the 1,500 of Germany's finest scholars, scientists and intellectuals now living in forced exile, 40 were from Heidelberg; they were expelled for racial and political reasons.

Last December a typical celebration of the new Heidelberg was held. The name of its Institute of Physics was changed to that of the Philip-Lenard Institute, after a Professor Lenard who is one of the most rabid of Jew-baiters, and the chief polemicist against Einstein and his "Jewish" physics.

This is the new Heidelberg, a place where scholarship and science have been murdered in the name of a madhouse chauvinism. What does any American scholar have to do with such an institution? The Heidelberg celebration, curiously enough, is called for June 30, which is the anniversary of the famous Nazi purge in which Hitler slaughtered some of his closest friends, including Captain Roehm. And another curious piece of Nazi plotting was uncovered by the magazine Nature in this connection. This is not the 550th year of Heidelberg, but "according to original sources verified at the British Museum," it is really the 549th anniversary of the founding of Heidelberg.

Hitler is isolated; Hitler is desperate; and just as he has used the Olympics for his propaganda, he is now making this clumsy attempt to win the scholars of Europe and America to sympathy with his blood-stained, medieval regime. The scholars of America should follow suit, and turn this celebration into an international demonstration of the loathing with which the world regards Hitler and his crimes against science and freedom.

Mexico's Spokesmen

A GOOD-WILL delegation representing Mexico's united labor confederation has just arrived in New York City. Among its members are the general secretaries of the miners and oil-workers trade unions. The presence of the delegation in this country could hardly have been more opportune. There are signs that the Liberty Leaguers and other reactionaries are about to launch a campaign of calumny against Mexico, and to openly champion the group of renegades to the Mexican people headed by Plutarco Calles and Luis Morones.

Mexico's labor envoys, representing practically the whole of the industrial working class, will make known the realities of the labor movement in their country and the recent progressive achievements of the Mexican people as a whole. It will present the official greetings of the Confederacion de Trabajadores de Mexico to the Executive Committee of the American Federation of Labor.

Since the C.R.O.M. collapsed, the A.F. of L. has had no fraternal relations with the organized workers of Mexico. The interests of labor in both countries require a resumption of such relations now.

Ethiopia and World War

JOSEPH FREEMAN

AN inspired dispatch from Rome describes Mussolini as growing bald, grey and fat. There are indelible little lines at the corners of his eyes and on his forehead. But Il Duce is in an exceptionally good mood and is said to be a happy man. His troops have broken the Ethiopian empire, defeated its armies, forced the Negus and the royal family into exile.

Barbaric use of poison gas against a people inadequately armed gave the Italians the advantage; so did modern road-building, heavy guns, tanks, airplanes, all employed in a cynical imperialist assault. But even these advantages might not have prevailed except for the tactical blunders which the Ethiopian command committed almost from the beginning of the war.

In the long run, however, Ethiopia was defeated by European imperialist rivalry, supported by the passivity of the reactionaries in the European trade-union movement.

Mussolini, facing economic catastrophe at home, diverted the restlessness of the Italian people into a war of colonial conquest, and met with no real resistance from the major European powers. Britain in particular has rendered aid and comfort to fascism both in Italy and in Germany. In John Strachey's phrase, the Baldwin government has acted as Hitler's broker in the crisis following the remilitarization of the Rhineland. It has similarly aided Mussolini by hampering collective oil sanctions. These policies affected each other. Every advantage gained by Italy encouraged Hitler; every advantage gained by Germany encouraged Mussolini. Britain's game of playing off one power against another to its own advantage has smoothed the way for both fascist aggressors.

These are among the contradictions of European capitalism today; for actually the triumph of Italian fascism in Ethiopia weakens the British empire in two of its most vital areas—Africa and the route to India. Eventually, the victories of Graziani and Badoglio will increase the friction between Italy and Britain. But for the moment the Baldwin government is so intent upon encouraging Hitler that it is willing to sacrifice some of its immediate interests in East Africa. The fact is that not a peep came out of London when the Italian troops marched in the Lake Tana area, British sphere of influence in Ethiopia.

This passive aid to Mussolini has marked British policy from the beginning of the Ethiopian crisis. Fascist Italy opened its campaign for the conquest of Ethiopia in December, 1934, when it manufactured a border dispute over Ualual. In May, 1935, the League of Nations set up a Committee of Five to arbitrate this dispute. Italy refused to arbitrate the border question; and so impotent was the League that the Committee of Five suspended its sittings just when determined action on its part might have compelled Mussolini to reconsider his colonial adventure. When the Committee

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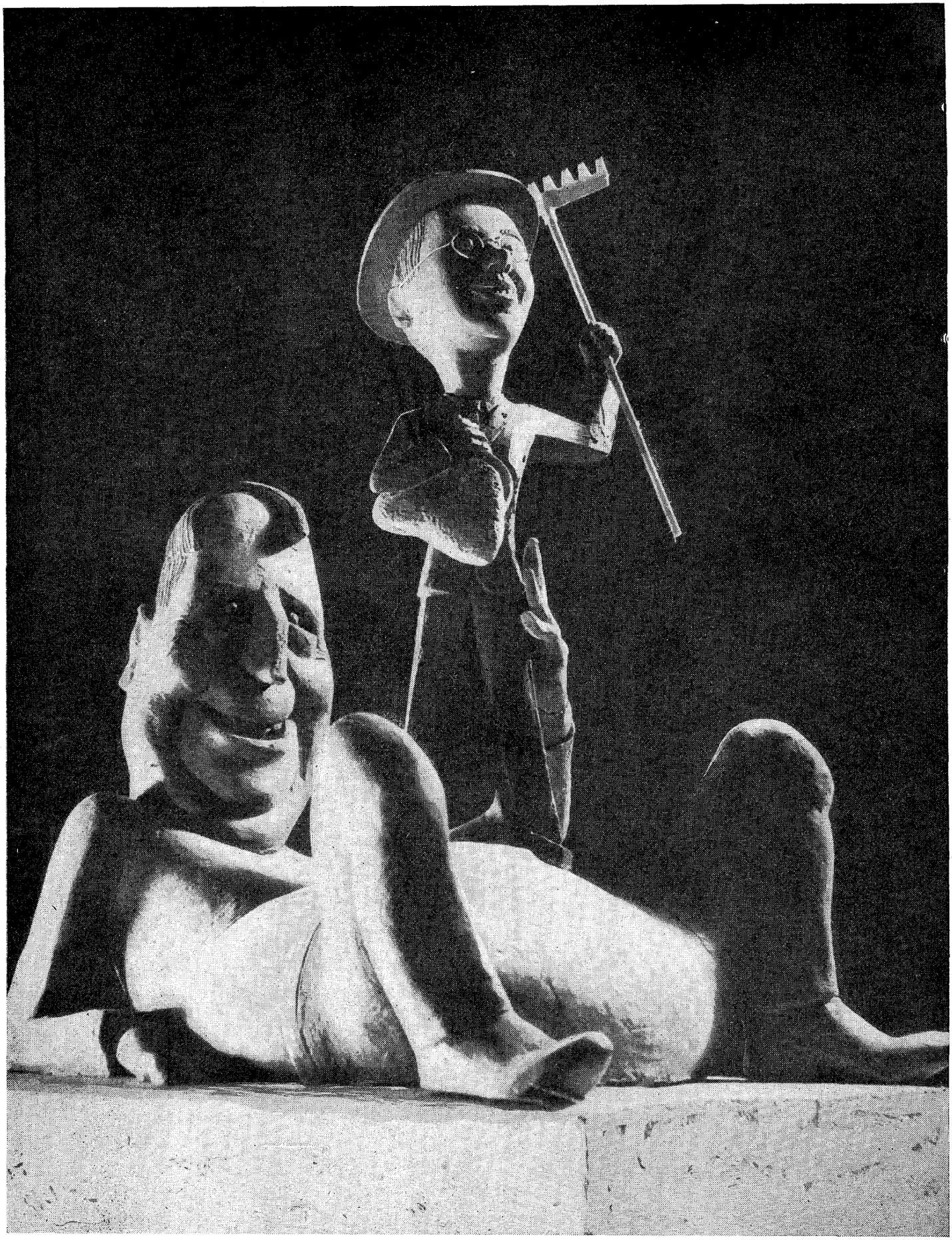

GOVERNOR LANDON

Robert Cronbach

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met again, it omitted the border question from its deliberations. It thereby gave Mussolini a free hand in Ethiopia. This failure to take effective action against fascist imperialism was repeated in August, 1935, when Britain and France offered Italy a settlement including Ethiopian territory. Mussolini rejected the offer, which he correctly interpreted as an admission of unwillingness to interfere with his planned invasion. In offering him part of Ethiopia, British imperialism encouraged him in the attempt to seize the whole of it.

The impotence of the League became ludicrously apparent in September, 1935. The Committee of Five submitted an "impartial" report which blamed neither Ethiopia nor Italy. Again Mussolini drew the logical conclusion. He knew there would be no serious interference with his project. Then Britain made a gesture toward defending its African interests. Sir Samuel Hoare, at that time Foreign Secretary, pledged his government to "collective maintenance of the League covenant in its entirety." A British fleet was dispatched to the Mediterranean. A proposal was made to have the Ethiopian government reorganized by League advisers who would recognize Italy's imperialist interests. Mussolini rejected this offer. The League council then decided to act against Italy under the covenant; but since this decision took no effective form, Italy began its invasion of Ethiopia in October, 1935.

Throughout the diplomatic negotiations of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute, there was an evident difference of policy between France and Britain of which Mussolini always took advantage. By November, 1935, Britain and France appeared to have arrived at some agreement and the League thereupon ordered the application of economic sanctions against Italy as an aggressor nation. Progressive men and women in every country greeted this decision as a triumph for the system of collective security; it seemed to be the first organized attempt to halt and punish aggressive military action.

At this time the British elections were under way and it was freely predicted that if the Baldwin government was returned to office it would at once doublecross the League, make an imperialist trade with Italy at Ethiopia's expense and kick the system of collective security in the slats by promoting increased armaments and separate alliances. This prediction was fulfilled. The League's economic action against Italy did not include the most effective of all, oil sanctions. Under these circumstances, Italy was able to withstand the so-called economic siege and to carry on the invasion of Ethiopia.

In December, 1935, came the Hoare-Laval plan for settling the war. Here French and British imperialism gave Mussolini practically everything he wanted. The plan leaked out through two French newspapers and created such a storm of protest in England that Sir Samuel Hoare was forced to resign. Nevertheless, the Hoare-Laval plan, to which Mussolini did not give an immediate reply, was employed as an excuse for delaying effective economic action against Italy. When the Soviet Union, Mexico and Rumania indicated that they were willing to impose an oil embargo against the fascist aggressor, the League Committee of Eighteen decided to postpone action until the League Council had had time to consider the Hoare-Laval proposals. These proposals, however, came to nothing, thanks to the widespread popular opposition to them both in France and in Britain.

The muddled state in which the Baldwin government finds itself is indicated by two illuminating items in Claude Cockburn's The Week of April 22, published in London. It now appears that Premier Baldwin himself never read the final text of the Hoare-Laval proposals. Furthermore, one of the reasons for the slow action of the British fleet in the Mediterranean last August was that the Admiralty did not possess any plans of action based on the assumption that Italy might be a possible enemy. The fact is, that apart from its technical deficiencies today, the British ruling class is divided on its foreign policy. There is a group that is alarmed at Hitler's and Mussolini's threat to British interests. But so far the Baldwin group has prevailed in its policy of aiding the fascist aggressors.

The maneuvers of British and French imperialism on the Ethiopian question had the most serious consequences in Europe. Impressed by the impotence of the League and unwillingness of Britain to take effective measures against an aggressor Italy, Hitler marched into the Rhineland in March of this year. Like his fascist colleague in Italy, der Fuehrer counted on Britain's passive role on the remilitarization of the Rhineland. His calculation was a shrewd one; Britain failed to support effective measures to restrain Nazi aggression and this in turn further encouraged Mussolini in his war on Ethiopia.

In general, the policy of the Baldwin government in supporting fascism has largely been responsible for Japanese aggression in China and against the Soviet Union, German aggression in western Europe and Italian aggression in Africa. Next to Hitler, the Baldwin government has been most responsible for paving Europe's road to war. Had it accepted Soviet proposals for oil sanctions against Italy, Mussolini would in all likelihood have been stopped in Ethiopia. Even now such action can effectively hamper Italian imperialism. The fall of Haile Selassie still leaves the Italians with a long and difficult campaign of penetration on their hands. The experience of France and Spain in Morocco and of the United States in Nicaragua indicates that a colonial people, even poorly armed, can put up protracted resistance to an imperialist invader. It took the Japanese two years of hard fighting to subdue the Chinese guerilla fighters defending the independence of Manchuria. And now the Ethiopians give every evidence of determination to fight it out with the Italian invaders.

For their resistance to be ultimately effective, Britain would have to enter into a collective agreement with other powers for oil sanctions against Italy, and would have to cut Italy's line of communication through the Suez Canal. But Britain is afraid of complications. The Week attributes this to reports from Rome which have thrown the British imperialists into consternation. These reports state that in the most powerful quarters of the Fascist Party and the army the belief that now or never is the time to clear the British out of the Mediterranean is developing into a mania. The fascists are convinced that it will be child's play to sink the British fleet, mop up Egypt, overrun Palestine; and from Cairo, Vincent Sheean reports that the Italians actually have a considerable military superiority over the British in the Mediteranean.

The Ethiopian crisis thus leads directly to a possible war in Europe, which today means a world war. It means that labor and liberal organizations everywhere must take immediate action to combat the fascist and imperialist forces that are rapidly rushing mankind into a vast, universal slaughter. In this country we must demand that the United States render no aid to the fascist aggressors. Our ineffectual neutrality laws have enabled Big Business to ship war materials to Italy in the past year, materials which aided the fascists in their assault upon Ethiopia. Unless Mussolini's aggressive actions are penalized and halted, they are bound to encourage still further the aggressive actions of Germany and Japan. The peace of the world is seriously jeopardized by the impunity with which Italy has been permitted to raid and ravage Ethiopia. It has had its effect in Europe and Asia; it is bound eventually to have its effect on us too.

Ethiopia is still fighting and world peace demands that every possible aid be given to the Ethiopian guerilla fighters who will hamper Italian penetration. This means a strict embargo on arms, munitions, oil and credits to Italy, and the strengthening of the collective security system along the lines indicated by the Franco-Soviet pact.

The most effective step to be taken, however, is independent working-class action against war, supported by all liberal, progressive, peace-loving groups. The Communist International has made repeated proposals for such united action to the Second International and these have been repeatedly rejected. The time has now come when such united action is imperative at once if the world is not to be drenched in blood. United, independent action by trade unions and other progressive groups can prevent the shipment of war materials and surround the fascist aggressors with an "iron ring of isolation." Such popular action, if anything, can compel even some capitalist governments to hamper Mussolini, Hitler and Japan in their mad assaults upon world peace.

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Who Won at Trenton?

BRUCE MINTON

When a fish dies, it begins to stink at the head.
—Old German Proverb.

THE politicians had begun to filter into the Assembly Chamber when I arrived at the State House in Trenton. They were a scared lot. Mr. Zink, majority leader and Republican, looked furtively, almost apologetically, at the unemployed members of the Workers' Alliance in the balcony. Mr. Bogle slunk to his chair and pretended to be oblivious to the many eyes watching him. He had gained some dubious publicity a few days before by charging that he had "positive proof" that the unemployed occupying the Assembly for almost a week each received $4.50 daily from "unknown sources." The Democrats attempted to appear non-committal; after a few words with several of them, it was clear that they secretly gloated over the discomfit of the Republican majority.

Speaker Newcomb pounded the gavel. The Assembly hushed. The vast crowd in the aisles, the balcony and to both sides of the Assembly floor, quieted. Only the newspaper photographers bustled noisily, taking flashlight pictures. The fat reporter from New York clumsily dropped a bulb from the balcony into the press box. The Speaker pounded angrily for silence.

The unemployed looked down from the balcony into the Chamber that they had occupied for six days and six nights. They had

"Secretary" Harbridge

relinquished the seats on the floor this evening to the regular legislators. They watched the Assembly hold their session, these Insurgents who had stormed the capitol almost a week before and resolved that they would hold it until the legislature passed adequate cash relief. Either that or publicly admit that it had no interest in the fate of 300,000 jobless. The legislators had been stalling for weeks now. The invaders waited to see what they would do tonight.

A minister rose and took his place in the aisle before the front benches. He mumbled the opening prayer. "We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou art on the job . . ." A low murmur filled the Chamber as people whispered during the prayer. The reporter next to me leaned close. "You should see the bunch demonstrating out in front of the building," he remarked. "Hundreds of delegates from all over New Jersey."

The minister sat down. Again Speaker Newcomb banged the gavel. He announced that the floor would be open to guest speakers. Churchmen and representatives of municipalities pleaded for immediate solution of the relief problem. They were followed by Ray Cooke, national organizer of the Workers' Alliance. The Insurgents in the balcony leaned forward intently. Cooke read a resolution of the organized agricultural workers in South Jersey, the ones that struck for higher wages at the Seabrook Farms in 1934. Their resolution demanded adequate cash relief, the elimination of the system which forces them to work in the fields for private employers at ten or fifteen cents an hour. If they refuse, they are promptly dropped from relief rolls. The same sort of blackmail was attempted in California, but the owners didn't get away with it.

Cooke turned. Everyone waited tensely, even the Assemblymen:

> I have something personal with Mr. Thomas. He telegraphed Governor Hoffman that those persons who have been in the Assembly the past week are led by professional agitators. I want to tell him to his teeth, he's a liar!

The Assemblymen jumped to their feet, yelling at the top of their voices, shaking their fists. They barred Cooke from the floor. There followed long speeches about the "dignity" of the Assembly, forever blighted by the invasion of "vagabonds." They blustered, most of them anxious to indulge in the usual Red-baiting orgy. Then, with nothing accomplished, the legislature adjourned. They had neglected to take up the relief problem.

The Insurgents swarmed down from the balcony, while the regular legislators hovered about, listening to those who had usurped their seats. If they stayed for a laugh, they didn't get it.

These workers and farmers of the Workers' Alliance, in contrast to the regular legislators, conducted their session with straightforward and serious intelligence. There was human dignity to the Assembly as the Insurgents "legislated" for themselves. One of them addressed the "Assembly":

> The Republicans and Democrats do not represent the people. You saw them tonight. You saw how they conducted themselves. You found out what they do and what they don't do. They represent Westinghouse, Roble Wire, Public Service, Morgan. We propose to have our own representatives at the Assembly the next election. We must form a Farmer-Labor Party, not in the distant future, but beginning tomorrow! Farmer-Labor Party Assemblymen will fight for us in this Chamber, will fight for our rights and the rights of the majority.

The little bought pawns who regularly hold Assembly seats because they have proven

"Speaker" John Spain

good lackeys to the big corporations, winced. They heard the Assembly of farmers and workers unanimously adopt the resolution calling for the immediate formation of a local Farmer-Labor Party. The regular legislators heard their doom pronounced—a doom that will overtake them, if not this year, then the next or the year following. They heard the names of committeemen selected and endorsed, pledged to take definite organizational steps to form the Farmer-Labor Party beginning the following day. They heard resolutions calling for people's candidates in the primaries a few weeks off.

The Insurgents voted to stay on in the Chamber for two more days until the next session of the regular Assembly. The legislators went home. Sympathizers and visitors lingered for a while, then they, too, left. The handful of unemployed prepared for the night.

ON the floor across the aisle from me, an exhausted girl had finally dropped to sleep. Near her, under the carved oak desk, huddled her six-year-old brother. The

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sensitive face was pale. An undernourished child of the unemployed, fighting side by side with his parents for the right to live.

Women curled up on desks and benches. A Negro from Camden slumped over the desk in front of me, head buried in his arms. On the far side of the room the farm delegation settled down, feet wrapped in newspapers, rolled coats under their heads. At the rostrum, the leaders talked in low voices. John Spain sat in the middle. He's a big fellow, round-faced, light-haired, chewing a cigar—"to make me think straight," as he puts it. He blinked to keep awake. He or any of the other leaders have hardly slept in six days. Spain joined the Workers' Alliance a year ago because it advocated industrial unionism and functioned democratically. He's from Trenton, born and raised there. Irish descent, thirty-three. "I spent all my time reading about labor," he told me. A new leader in a new battle, the battle against the whole set-up of finance capitalism which wants to eliminate the unemployed, starve them, ignore them, anything but feed them.

Twenty-six workers slept in the Assembly Hall that night. The chamber with its Corinthian pilasters running up to the tan-and-gold ceiling, with its pomposity and bad taste, seemed a fit meeting place for the surly legislators who had gathered earlier in the evening. At the desk of Mr. Thomas ("He's a liar!"), a steel worker snored. He had told me about his six children and wife, showed me a picture of them standing before a painted backdrop. He has been unemployed for over three years. When he heard about the unemployed storming the capitol, he came over from Newark to join the fight. On state relief he had received $18 every fifteen days, three quarts of milk a day, $15 a month rent—that figures out to less than 28 cents a day per person exclusive of the milk and the occasional half ton of coal he obtained.

Nearby lay a laborer, a naturalized citizen with a heavy Polish accent. He, too, has a family—seven children and a wife. For some reason he got less relief from the state than the steel workers. He didn't know why. Thirteen dollars for fifteen days, three quarts of milk and $15 a month rent. "No gotta clothes," he said. "No gotta shoes. No gotta life, nothin'. My kids, he can't eat right. 'N' now they taka that, too."

THE Roosevelt administration watched events at Trenton. The whole question of relief has reached a new stage. Back in 1931, Hoover had insisted that the unemployed could and must be cared for by private charity. Pressure first forced the states to take over the administration of relief and then the federal government. Now the drive is on to reverse the cycle: the federal government pulled out of direct aid to the unemployed last November. The states also try to get out from under. In New Jersey, the ruling clique claims that the relief burden is a local problem, the concern of municipalities. Once more, the attempt is made to leave the unemployed to the "charity" of local benefactors.

New Jersey shows the way—as The Herald Tribune put it some weeks back. If federal unemployment relief can be successfully withdrawn, the next step may well be the curtailment of W.P.A. with the intention finally of eliminating it altogether. In New Jersey, the plan to shift the burden to municipalities resulted in what local newspapers, controlled by big corporations and other powerful interests, suddenly discovered to be an "economy." The following table lists payments made by the state Emergency Relief Administration in Trenton over a two-week period and the expenses in the same city during the ten days that the municipality administered relief:

	E.R.A.	Municipal
Families receiving food orders	3,682	1,249
Cost of food	$27,762.00	$5,370.00
Shelter	10,271.44	None
Milk	4,035.89	None
Clothing	3,140.80	None
Coal	4,601.97	None
Physicians	2,380.23	None
Medical Supplies	1,182.64	None
Hospitalization	2,244.25	None
Miscellaneous	356.00	None
	$55,975.22	$5,370.00

The "economy" is aided by throwing all single men off relief, by cutting down the amount of food given and the number of families receiving aid, by eliminating all other expenditures. Small wonder that the state administration is anxious to throw relife on to the municipalities.

On April 15, after all available funds transferable from other state departments had been exhausted, the New Jersey legislature announced that the counties and towns would receive no aid from the state and that local communities must care for the unemployed. These local groups had neither sufficient funds nor adequate sources of income to meet the emergency. The unemployed faced starvation.

But the unemployed had organized for just such a crisis. In Washington, D. C., a month or so before, all organized unemployment groups had banded together, taking the name of one of the groups—the Workers' Alliance. The new organization, which included the membership of the National Unemployment Councils and other unemployment groups as well as the old Workers' Alliance, was non-political, non-sectarian, a broad organization of unemployed with a militant program. When the emergency arose in New Jersey, the expanded Workers' Alliance stepped in.

The legislature had steadfastly refused to allocate new funds or pass laws providing for unemployment relief. On Tuesday, April 21, the representatives of the Workers' Alliance watched the legislators from the balcony. Clearly, the politicians had no intention of considering the relief problem. The workers looked at one another. Perhaps they recalled the invasion last December of the Wisconsin state capitol by W.P.A. workers. For when the Assembly recessed, this handful of men and women walked into the Chamber and proclaimed themselves an insurgent or mock assembly.

There was consternation in high quarters and small-town editors fell all over themselves denouncing the "horde of misguided tatterdemalions," "the raucous and impolitic demands of 'jobless' persons whose very motives have been brought into question." Governor Hoffman sat back. He had little time to spare for the problem—he had been much too busy draining the last drop of publicity from the Lindbergh kidnaping case and preparing his campaign for reelection. But when the unemployed invaded the State House, Hoffman saw that here was a chance to force the legislature to reenact the sales tax—the Governor's pet scheme. The former sales tax had been repealed after three months' trial because mass resentment had been so great that the legislature had no alternative.

The Insurgents proposed a far different program: no sales tax which put the burden of unemployment relief on underpaid workers and the unemployed themselves. Tax unearned increment, corporation profits, large incomes, such luxuries as furs, jewelry, new high-priced automobiles. Tax trucks of big corporations plying between Pennsylvania and New York and using New Jersey roads.

The regular Assembly turned a deaf ear

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on such "impractical" measures. Somehow, New Jersey lawmakers are closer to Westinghouse Electric, the Public Service Corporation, the Roble Wire Company and other large corporations than they are to the majority of their constituents. In one of the wealthiest states in the union, harboring some of the most profitable corporations, the legislature could find no available source of income to provide for the 300,000 jobless.

IN New Jersey, the plan to shunt responsibility for unemployment relief from the federal government to the state, from the state to the municipality, worked smoothly —except that the unemployed refused to play their part of the game. An official of the American Legion stood next to me in the balcony just before the regular Assembly convened for the second time since the Workers' Alliance had occupied the State House. He stared at the unemployed as though they were strange, dangerous animals. "A bunch of agitators," he sighed. "A bunch of outside Reds thinking only of their own troubles. What would this world be like if all of us worried about our own particular problems?"

Again the legislature met. Again the Insurgents moved to the balcony. Speaker Newcomb had promised that they would be readmitted to the floor of the Assembly after the regular session. The Assemblymen promptly went back on their word. They ordered the police to lock the doors and keep the unemployed out.

They convened and debated bills—on the best method of distributing auto licenses; on the type of trap that should be used in trapping fur-bearing animals; on promoting an aged state employe. They set up a committee of five Republicans to allocate future relief funds which they made no provision to raise. The new committee assured the Republicans that they would get whatever benefits might accrue from handing out patronage. Then the Assembly adjourned.

The Insurgents held their last meeting in the balcony. Their invasion had lasted eight days and eight nights. It had dramatized the plight of the unemployed not only in New Jersey but nationally. The mock sessions had demonstrated the impotence and corruption of the regular Assemblymen.

More important, the Insurgents had laid the organizational base for a Farmer-Labor Party in those sections of New Jersey where this party had not already been formed. Most of the unemployed who had occupied the State House or who had come to encourage the invaders had been supporters of the two old parties. By the time they marched out of the State House they had learned that nothing could be hoped for from either Republicans or Democrats. Only independent political action could put candidates into the Assembly that would represent workers and unemployed in more than name.

On the train returning to New York, I sat in a coach with the regular Assemblymen who were hurrying back to their districts. They reassured each other. Their's had been the victory at Trenton. Hadn't they locked the invaders out of the State House after eight days?

They had not heard John Spain's final words: "The next time we come back," he said, "we'll have sixty thousand 'Assemblymen'."

The victory at Trenton belongs to those who gained most from the "invasion." In the State House, the unemployed gave the Farmer-Labor Party of New Jersey a powerful impetus. The Workers' Alliance had gained prestige, the assurance of rapid expansion.

The reactionaries can claim victory. Those who saw what happened in Trenton, those who followed the day-by-day events, know that the real victory did not go to them.

THE CIVILIZERS

Boardman Robinson

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A Budget of Poverty and War

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON.

THE new budget which Mr. Neville Chamberlain, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has just introduced into the House of Commons is essentially a budget of war preparation. He appropriates over £40,000,000 for increased armament expenditure: this is the largest single increase in such expenditure ever proposed by a British Chancellor in any one year.

However, there was nothing unexpected in that. But there was, I must say, a certain refinement about the way in which the British government proposes to raise a part of the necessary money. It proposes to do so by putting an extra 2d. of taxation on every pound of tea sold. And it proposes to impose this tax at a time when the facts as to the present standard of life of the poorer section of the British people are being revealed in some very striking official and semi-official reports. It may interest American readers to hear the conclusions arrived at in these reports. William Gallacher, the Communist member of the House of Commons, in an effective impromptu answer to the Chancellor's Budget speech in the House of Commons, mentioned the Orr report, "Food, Health and Income." This report shows that, according to an official government investigation, half the people of this country are underfed.

I have had an opportunity of seeing another and in many ways even more remarkable report which is shortly to be issued in a book entitled *Poverty and Public Health,* by Dr. McGonigle, the Medical Officer of Health for Stockton-on-Tees. It contains the most detailed account of undernourishment and its devastating effects on the workers' health published in this country.

Dr. McGonigle writes that the one thing which sustains the undernourished women of Stockton-on-Tees and enables them to get through their day is the stimulant of a strong cup of tea with plenty of sugar in it. He strongly endorses the view of most British working-class women that in the present conditions of their lives tea is a prime necessity. And it is this necessity which the government has now singled out to raise in price.

The Orr report itself gives exact figures as to the undernourishment prevalent in this country. Sir John Orr divided up the population of England into six groups, according to the amount of income which they have available to spend on food.

He found that four and a half million Britons had 4s. per head to spend on food; nine million had 6s. a week; another nine million 8s. a week; a third nine million 10s. a week; a fourth nine million 12s. a week; another four and a half million 14s. a week and over.

He further found that a quarter of the children of the country were in Group One. Now, the British Medical Association in 1933, when food prices were considerably lower than they are today, estimated that 5s. per week was the very lowest expenditure on food which could maintain a person in health.

Thus, a quarter of all the children in this country get far less food than would enable them to grow up healthy and well-developed. But if one takes, not what diet will just maintain health, but what diet will give the best health, then one finds that not merely the lowest group, but the whole population of this country, with the exception of the four and a half million people in the highest income group, are underfed.

Here are Sir John Orr's own conclusions:

> The average diet of Group One is inadequate for perfect health in all the constituents. Group Two is adequate only in total proteins and total fat. Group Three is adequate in energy value, protein and fat, but below standard in minerals and vitamins. Group Four is adequate in iron, phosphorus and vitamins, but probably below standard in calcium. Group Five has an ample margin of safety in everything, with the possible exception of calcium; in Group Six the standard requirements are exceeded in every case.

Hence, only the richest 10 percent of the population of this country gets not merely enough, but good enough quality of food to maintain perfect health.

Sir John Orr has calculated the amount of extra food which it would be necessary for the people of Britain to be able to buy and eat in order for them to have such food as the richest 10 percent of the population do now actually buy and eat. In order to be really well fed the people of Britain would have to eat and drink 80 percent more milk, 41 percent more butter, 55 percent more eggs, 124 percent more fruit, 87 percent more vegetables and 29 percent more meat.

Although the poorer 90 percent of the population eats and drinks so much less of these expensive foods than does the richer 10 percent, yet it eats just about the same amount of bread and flour and potatoes, the cheapest foods. In other words, the working part of the population can afford almost no substitutes for their immense deficiencies in all the more expensive foods.

The Orr report goes on to investigate the effect on health of this degree of inadequacy of food. The biggest effect is on the children. Sir John Orr finds that children in elementary schools at 13 years of age average 57 inches in height. Children in public schools,[1] who, Sir John Orr reports, are drawn exclusively from the richest 10 percent of the population, average 64 inches in height at the age of 13. (In a word, the learned investigator discovers that children grow better if they have enough to eat.)

The effect of this degree of undernourishment upon the health of the British population is naturally very marked. The incidence of most of the diseases which are directly due to malnutrition is very difficult to measure. Rickets is, of course, the best known example of such diseases. But there seems to be no agreement whatever between public authorities as to the degree of rickets which exists in this country.

For example, the London County Council in 1933 reassuringly reported that only three percent of children in L.C.C. schools were suffering from rickets. On the other hand, a Board of Education Committee reported in 1931 that they had examined a sample of 1,638 unselected elementary school children and found that 87.5 percent "had one or more signs of rickets." So a good deal seems to depend on the investigator.

However, there is one disease which is chiefly due to malnutrition, for which there is an objective test. This is anemia. You can count what is called the hemoglobin content of the blood. The hemoglobin value of the blood for a perfectly healthy child, should be at least 90. In a routine medical examination of elementary school children, 25 percent showed that they had a hemoglobin value of less than 70, and were therefore gravely anemic. In another group selected because of the poverty of their parents, to be given milk during school, 49.5 percent showed a hemoglobin value of under 70.

This investigation was undertaken in Warrington. In Newcastle-upon-Tyne children between the ages of one and five years were investigated. Of children drawn from the poorest class in the city 23 percent were definitely anemic and in children drawn from the well-to-do class, none were anemic.

In order to supplement their general conclusions, Sir John Orr and his colleagues examined a sample of 2,640 individual family budgets. They found that in the case of families with an income of £2,000 a year, 15s. per week per head was spent on food. The poorest families examined were spending less than 2s. per week per head on food. Therefore, the moderately rich in this country spend over seven times the amount on food spent by the poorest families.

It is in this situation that the government puts 2d. on the pound of tea.

The official facts and figures contained in the Orr report have had a considerable effect in shaking complacency in this country. I do not know if any similar investigation has been or is being conducted in America. The results would be interesting.

[1] I should explain that the term "public school" means in Britain "private school," i. e. school exclusively reserved for the rich.

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Palestine Under Britain's Heel

ALTER BRODY

THESE few years have been years of political unveilings. Many monumental structures whose stark outlines have been draped from public view by layers of diplomatic canvas, have suddenly been revealed to a startled world. In China, in Ethiopia, on the Rhine, fascism is showing its hand with a bluntness which is setting new fashions in international relations. Not that Adolph or Benito or Hirota are devotees of diplomatic plain-speaking. On the contrary. Their utterances have plumbed depths of transparent hypocrisy and humbug that the suave pre-fascist diplomats would have scorned. The latter aimed at a certain surface plausibility, however specious. The fascists are unhampered by such considerations. No statement is too absurd or contradictory for them. But their actions have a consistency and directness that more than makes up for their verbal mendacity. Their guns and bayonets thrust brazenly through the film of diplomatic gauze and the world understands at once what they are driving at.

The Jewish world—particularly the hundreds of thousands of Jews who have sought refuge from anti-semitism in Palestine and the millions of desperate Jews in Germany, Poland, Rumania and other central European countries who are looking hopefully to Palestine—is also learning the new diplomatic language. Two recent dispatches which have appeared in the world press, constitute an important revelation to the Jewish people, a message as frank and as cruel as the gospel that Japanese and Italian guns are preaching in China and Ethiopia. Taken together these two dispatches do more to illuminate the shifting British foreign policy on which Zionism is gambling the lives of nearly 400,000 Jews than anything that has come from Downing Street, not excepting the famous Balfour Declaration.

The first of these dispatches dated January 19 is by the inspired London correspondent of The New York Times, "Augur." Under the heading of "Palestine Gains as British Imperial Base," he says:

> . . . In the sea of the native population of Arabia the Palestinian Jews stand isolated . . . if rightly used an element of strength for the Empire . . . by tradition British policy is favorable to the Arabs . . . but the benefits of British rule have not made the Arabs British-minded. Events in Egypt point otherwise. The great Saudi Kingdom is not really a friend of Britain. Its sovereign dreams of a United Arabian State. . . . The possibility is seen that the Jewish population will provide the physical force not only for its own protection but for the defense of the Palestine citadel against any attack from without. Military experts say a Jewish militia of 50,000 will be a reality tomorrow.

The second is an Associated Press dispatch from Paris dated April 15. Under the heading of "United States of Arabia Planned by Britain," it says:

> A proposal for a United States of Arabia [nationalist sources said today] is being promoted by Great Britain in an effort to align the Arabs against further Italian expansion in the Red Sea. . . . The dream of an Arabian Empire composed of most of the kingdoms, mandates and protectorates forming the Arabian peninsula, was believed by many nationalists to be moving rapidly toward fulfillment. . . . The inclusion of Palestine is regarded as less likely.

The dispatch goes on to quote the Paris *Le Journal* as commenting: "England which has often taken advantage of the dissensions of the Arabs in the past, deems it opportune to unite them at a time when Italy has shown itself stronger than London believed." What the astute *Le Journal* failed to add was that the item about the inclusion of Palestine being "less likely" was obviously inserted as a sedative for Zionist nerves. The idea of a United States of Arabia *without* Palestine is a political and economic absurdity.

What conclusions are Jews to draw from these two contradictory statements, both of which have every earmark of being officially inspired? Is one statement intended for the Jews and the other for the Arabs on the good old imperialist principle of divide and conquer? No. The key to these dispatches is the difference in their date lines. In the three intervening months the international situation had undergone a radical change and British foreign policy executed a *volte-face* of ominous importance to the Jews of Palestine.

On January 19 the struggle in Ethiopia was still indecisive and England seemed assured of French support against the ambitious Italian designs in Africa and the Near East. With the additional reinforcement of the prospective Jewish "physical force" she was developing in Palestine, England felt safely entrenched on the Suez Canal and did not see the need of concessions to the neighboring Arabian peoples.

By April 15 two interrelated events had occurred. The crisis precipitated by Hitler's remilitarization of the Rhine split the Franco-British front, and Italy—freed from the menace of a Franco-British Mediterranean alliance—struck out with its full strength and crushed Ethiopian resistance. Having lost French support as a result of its flirtation with Hitler, Britain is looking around hastily for available allies to bolster its precarious position on Suez Canal. Shall it be a Jewish Palestine with a mere 400,000 Jews or a United States of Arabia with a population of 12,000,000—a stroke that would win the loyalty of rebellious Arab Egypt and at the same time stir up unrest among the Arabs of Italian Tripoli and Libya? One plan necessarily precludes the other. Let the Palestinian Jews face the fact and all that flows from it—Britain is contemplating a United States of Arabia.

Already something is beginning to flow from it—blood. Within a week of the publication of the United States of Arabia scheme, riots broke out in every part of Palestine. To date more than thirty Jews and Arabs have been killed and hundreds more wounded. A general strike has been called by the Arab Executive and the Jewish community faces a situation that may make the 1929 crisis pale into insignificance. The question is pertinent whether it is a mere coincidence that these fatal riots have followed so closely on the heels of Britain's shift of policy. I gravely doubt it. At all times, ever since the Balfour Declaration, the Arabs have been supplied by British imperialism and Zionist policies with ample reason for anti-Jewish bitterness. But it may be safely asserted that there have been no serious riots when the British Colonial Office wanted to discourage them. The proof is that during the last three years, though the British policy was pro-Zionist and the Jewish immigration quotas, which are the bone of contention between the two races, quadrupled—yet no serious anti-Jewish riots developed. And why, it is important to ask, were these quotas increased in 1933? Why this sudden reversal of policy on a matter about which the Colonial Office had been so intractable all these years? Was it out of tender solicitude for the Jewish victims of the Third Reich? An analysis of the Palestine Jewish immigration figures for 1932-35 shows a jump from 9,000 in 1932 to 30,000 in 1933 to 42,000 in 1934 and about 60,000 in 1935. But only 16 percent of the Jewish immigrants were refugees from the Reich. The great majority came from those ever-full, ever-present reservoirs of Jewish persecution, Poland and Rumania, which for years had fought in vain for larger Palestinian quotas from the British Colonial Office.

The explanation for the three fat years of Zionism in Palestine lies elsewhere. Hitler was merely a coincidence. The real reason is furnished by the "Augur" dispatch of January 19. In the course of the snarling over the Ethiopian bone it has come out that realistic "conversations" about the fate of Ethiopia were going on between the Italian, French and British Foreign Offices for several years. Italy was preparing for coming events, and so was Britain. What Britain's plans were, was not known at the time. But "Augur's" belated dispatch gives us an inkling. Among other things Britain was planning a formidable Jewish army in Palestine. That is why in three years more Jews, most of them of military age, were per-

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mitted to enter Palestine than in the rest of the postwar period combined.

The turn of the international roulette unexpectedly brought Zionism within sight of its most distant objectives, a Jewish majority in Palestine, a Jewish-dominated government and even that Revisionist fantasy —a Jewish army. Another ten years of Jewish immigration at the prevailing tempo and those dreams would have been realities (that is what Zionism figured). But unexpectedly the international roulette has turned again. The Zionist leaders have gambled recklessly on the wheel of British foreign policy. They might as well realize that they have lost.

Britain has other plans now—both for the Jews and the Arabs. Imperialism is a heartless whore. Having coquetted with Zionism for a while, encouraged it to consider Palestine its own already, fed the flames of Arab resentment with the fuel of Zionist chauvinism and jingoism—British imperialism suddenly throws over its giddy favorite.

Possibly the wheel may turn again. But the dictates of imperial self-interest point otherwise. I have asserted before that there are no anti-Jewish riots in Palestine when the British Colonial Office does not want any. It is of interest that the most immediate demand of the Arab demonstrators is a cessation of Jewish immigration (which has already plunged considerably because of the depression in Palestine). It is just barely possible that this might coincide with the requirements of the new British foreign policy which demands conciliation with the Arabs at all (Jewish) costs. At any rate according to The New York Times (April 21) the British High Commissioner Sir Arthur Wauchope "recommended that an Arab delegation go to London to discuss the matter with the British Colonial Office."

What is the prospect for the Jews of Palestine in a United States of Arabia, headed probably by the fanatical Ibn Saud, the Kemal of Pan-Arabia? Let us not mince words. The prospect is nothing short of extermination. Not the relatively gradual extermination which the Jews are facing in Germany and Poland but the kind of extirpation for which there is a recent political precedent in the Near East. I refer to the total slaughter of the Armenians of Anatolia who were the same sort of threat to the renascent Turkish nationalism. It is a ghastly irony that the Zionists, who have been attacking the promising Jewish settlement in Biro Bidjan as being exposed to the danger of a Russo-Japanese conflict, should have led the Jewish people into such a trap by following the will-o'-the-wisp of British imperialism.

The crisis calls for an immediate political reorientation on the part of the Jews of Palestine. Half a loaf is better than none, particularly if the whole loaf rightfully belongs to somebody else. The Zionists must renounce special rights in Palestine which they do not claim in other countries of which they are citizens and consider themselves Arabian in a proposed United States of Arabia. It may be difficult, but no more difficult than for Jews to regard themselves as Americans or Englishmen or Frenchmen. After all, though the Jews have forgotten it and the Arabs have forgotten it—they are fellow-Semites. The Balfour Declaration which envisages the Jews as the ruling race in Palestine with the Arab majority living "protected" in sort of Indian reservations, must be voluntarily renounced and denounced by the Jews. The British had no intention of realizing it when they issued it and it has only served the purpose of keeping kindred races apart. The Jews who have consistently fought democratic home rule for Palestine out of fear of the Arab majority, must join with the Arabs in pressing for self-determination from England, even if it puts the Arabs in control of their own country. Let the Jews defeat British efforts to exploit Arab-Jewish differences by lining up with the Arabs against British imperialism. When political democracy is achieved let Jewish labor join the Arab peasantry in a struggle against the Arab Effendis and Jewish capitalists to achieve a Workers and Peasants government. In the final analysis in Palestine as well as in the rest of the world, the undeniably existing problem of the Jew can only be solved in a socialist society. The Soviet Union where anti-semitism is a political crime, has amply demonstrated that fact. Dr. Joseph Rosen, of the Joint Distribution Committee, says:

> In contrast to the passive resistance, not to speak of the active opposition of governments which the J. D. C. has frequently been confronted with in other countries, the Soviet Government has not merely actively cooperated in the work, but has actually taken the lead recognizing the solution of the Jewish problem as a state problem.

The renunciation of a National Jewish State in Palestine may be a bitter pill for the Zionists to swallow, but the alternative is national suicide. The Zionist Executive is still too intoxicated by the dream of a Jewish State which was "almost" in its grasp, to retreat now. The only hope of the Palestinian Jews is that the powerful Histadruth, the Palestine Jewish Federation of Labor, will properly evaluate the changed situation and make peace with the Arabs before it is too late.

Hearst Headline Blues

"Charge Reds Foment Revolution"
"Lynch Negro Who Wouldn't Say 'Mister'"
"Mayor Proposes Tax Solution"
"Weeps When He Learns He Married His Sister"

"U.S.S.R. Abolishes Ration"
"Professor Simpson Lectures on Sperm"
"100 Educators Praise Nation"
"Striking Miner Gets Twenty-Year Term"

"Student Rebels at Scolding; Stabs Teacher"
"Nab Fifty in Red Light Raid"
"10,000 Hear Six Year Old Girl Preacher"
"Broker Rapes and Murders Maid"

"Woman Dynamites Jail to Free Her Lover"
"Starvation Claims Mother and Tot"
"Roosevelt Says the Worst Is Over"
"Longshoremen Picket; Two Are Shot"

"Father Butchers Son With Axe"
"Many Gold Voices to Be Heard on Air"
"Attorney Dodd Uncovers Facts"
"The Right Reverend O'Connell Urges Prayer"

RICHARD WRIGHT.

In Time of Hesitation

While I hesitate, temporize, shrink—
Partly from fear,
Partly from ignorance that fearfulness breeds—

Thousands are walked to the block, the chair, the gallows,
the wall, and the mobman's tree,
No martyr gleam in their eyes sickly bright,
No anesthesia of saintly dream in their mind,
No paranoic imitation of Christ,
But terror like mine, or
That direct light of the unwavering aim
And the wisest anger that ever fired the veins of man.

While I grow uselessly older but to hear
In bed at last my own sentence of death
And face my last hour in the darkest hour before dawn when
the ailing go
Thousands in the street strive
Under the truncheon of maniac police—
Even then building world Soviet peace
While I temporize, hesitate, shrink.

MARTHA MILLET.

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Behind the French Elections

The Meaning of the People's Front

RAOUL DAMIENS

PARIS.

THE results of the French elections have surpassed the expectations of the People's Front movement. The combined vote of Communists and Socialists has reached a third of the nation's total; fascist and reactionary leaders have been crushed. A two-thirds Left majority is now assured in the Chamber of Deputies even if the expected defection of certain lukewarm Radical-Socialists actually occurs. The Socialists, 140 strong, have now replaced the Radical-Socialists as the largest parliamentary party and Leon Blum has announced his readiness to form the next French government. It is unlikely, however, that the Communists will enter the ministry even though they have secured 72 seats—nearly twice as many as they had expected.

According to the constitution, the new majority must delay its assumption of power till June; nevertheless, Blum, Daladier and Cachin will be consulted at once in order to avert the dangers of a financial panic, fascist provocations and financial complications—national calamities on which the hopes of the reaction still lie. Their crushing defeat at the polls has momentarily stunned the reactionaries, but the People's Front is quite aware of the risk it would take in giving them a whole month to recover. *L'Humanité* and the entire People's Front press sounds the warning: "We must stick together. The People's Front mission has only begun. The people must maintain its magnificent resolution and solidarity, thus obligating the representatives to keep faith, thus assuring a mass support of the People's Front government and thus resisting the maneuvers of the bankers and fascists."

Significant of the popular basis of the new parliament is its changed composition. Lawyers and professional men are plentifully outnumbered by working-class deputies, among them truck-gardeners, printers, plumbers, mechanics, cement workers, railroad workers, shoemakers and a restaurant waiter.

The French people have made no secret of where they stand. On any number of occasions, but notably in the course of the great demonstrations of July 14, 1935, and of February 16 last, they have notified the world in general and their own tories in particular that they are determined to have nothing to do with fascism on any pretext or in any of its disguises.

They want a revolution all right, but they refuse to be bulldozed into a "revolution" in the style of Mussolini, Hitler, Dollfuss, LaRocque, or any other clown dressed up by an agonizing capitalism as a "savior." They have very acutely analyzed the economic and political crisis which, thanks to an insane social organization, is, in the midst of plenty, underfeeding the mass of mankind, and, in the interests of munitions makers and imperialists, driving them to war. And with their remarkable faculty for clear-headed logic, they have come to the conclusion that the enemy is neither the Jew nor the freemason, neither Bolshevism nor the people beyond the frontiers, but two hundred families in their own midst, who control the wealth, the credit, the industry, the press and the state machinery which are the product of their own toil and gifts and which therefore belong to themselves—the very two hundred families who, in order to hang on to "their" property and to perpetuate their slipping grip, stage scandals and depressions at home and wars abroad, and then, changing raiment, reappear as the national liberators.

The French people have in the last two years made it amply clear that they know what they want. It is they, not so much their leaders, who have determined to have done with the stranglehold of the two hundred families. It is the pressure of the masses that has obliged the multitudinous parties to put water into their doctrinaire wine, and stand up resolutely together against the fascist menace; and it was they again, after the Front Populaire was born on July 14, 1934, who insisted that a negative union was not enough, and gave the men they trusted no peace till they worked out an affirmative platform upon which Communists, Socialists of every stripe, and Radicals of all degrees—in short, ninety percent of the French nation—could stand together, support, and if need be fight for. It will be they, finally—the recent congress of the reunited Confederation of Labor at Toulouse left no doubt on that head—who, should the party chiefs fail them in the end, will see to it that the planks of that platform are worked up into the state policy of the next government of France.

The program of the Front Populaire is a long way from turning the world upside down. It is anything but Communist; yet there is nothing in it that Communists cannot adhere to. It is a far cry even from what the Socialists in the end desire; yet the Socialists have approved and adopted it. If it goes a considerable way farther than anything the Radicals would have dreamed of standing behind two years ago, the vast mass of the rank and file of that party have nevertheless given it their blessing, for the good reason that the plain people which compose it have, since the fascist putsch of February 6, 1934, received a liberal (and even a radical) education in economics, finance and kindred subjects. The program, in a word, hardly spells an upheaval. Yet, in the light of the actual chaos, it does spell, in the economic domain, the initial steps toward progress. It does make a beginning at breaking the paralyzing grip of the decadent, irresponsible financial oligarchy upon the French state and the French national economy. But politically it is not a revolution at all, not, at any rate, in the classic sense of the word "Revolution." The French masses have had one dominant impulse in forming the Front Populaire: to preserve the democratic liberties and institutions of the Republic, acquired at the sacrifice of so much blood and struggle by the fathers of Frenchmen now living; and the first part of the program is dedicated to the task of guaranteeing and enlarging those liberties.

The French masses went to the polls on April 26 and on May 3 to vote for certain changes in their national household, lawfully, peacefully and in perfect orderliness, so as to save what is left of their national wealth from the waste and confusion which the irresponsible administration of the two hundred capitalist families have flung it into. They take seriously and literally what the patriots and "democrats" have been dinning into the ears of the masses for the better part of a century; that "in a republic, where every man has a vote, there is no room and no reason for violent revolution"; the ballot-box has taken the place of the barricade. Very well, they say, we will begin to make over the state by democratically expressing at the polls our dissatisfaction with the conduct of our common affairs by the two hundred families, and record our lawful will to turn them out and try somebody else.

Ah, but the financial-economic oligarchy do not quite see that. Now that their logic and exhortations turn against them, they drop the mask of democracy—of democracy and of patriotism too. The polling booth was a grand institution so long as it rocked the disinherited into a false sense of security and equality; but if the masses are to become conscious of their interests and their rights and use the vote to fling us out into the street, then we are against the republic and its nonsense about universal suffrage. We are against this "legal France" of the herd and the mob. The "real France" are

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we, the two hundred families, the new feudal lords of finance and industry—we and our lieutenants and non-coms of the fascist leagues, and their armies of hired thugs. Down with democratic republics! Long live the revolution à la Hitler, Mussolini and the noble French monkeys who try to ape them!

Superficially, this may appear like an exchange of roles. The revolutionists are for law and order and, according to some people, gradual change by peaceful, democratic processes. The possessing classes mount the barricades, romantically decorate themselves with insignia, mumble mystic slogans, and prepare with parades and military drills for the overthrow of their own bourgeois state by force and violence.

But that is by no means the case. There is nothing new in the action of the tories. What novelty there is, is in the verbiage. They have come out into the open. The times are too critical for hypocrisy. They have dropped the mask, that is all. Their position is not altered by a centimeter. Their consistency is unassailable. They have stood for law and order because and so long as the law was of their making and the order for their protection. They were patriotic because the *patrie* was essentially a bailiwick for the exploitation of the mob of their compatriots. They were ready to sacrifice the last French worker for the national interest, because and so long as the national interest was fundamentally their private interest. But they never hesitated, when the shoe changed to the other foot, to execute a swift and acrobatic about-face. The history of social change is, in large part, the record of the agility with which the superpatriotic possessing classes found justification, whenever their property and privileges were at stake, to make common cause with the enemies of their dear fatherland. The conduct of the tories in the American Revolution, the American Civil War and, more recently, the proceedings of the Kolchaks and Wrangels furnish delectable illustrations of actual tory sacrifice and devotion to the common good.

But—Charles Lamb noticed it already a hundred years ago—they order these things, among others, so much better in France. The instant it became manifest that the Front Populaire was no midsummer night's dream; the instant, more particularly, it seemed clear that the heterogeneous elements composing this bloc of the Left were determined to get together on a positive program of action, and that this program meant business, the whole vast and complex machine at the service of the two hundred families—the *grande presse,* the cinema, the radio, the politicians in Parliament and out—went to work like a single unit, night and day and overtime, to convince the country that this monstrous union of workers and peasants and intellectuals and artisans and civil servants and shopkeepers and veterans was the misbegotten creation of the freemasons, the Jews, Moscow, Wall Street, the City, the Germans —in short, of every spook in the nationalistic demonology, except the simple and obvious enough truth that the mass of the French people, forced by unemployment, misery and starvation in the midst of plenty to do some thinking, and driven by the menace of fascism and war to take action, had put their finger on the source of the trouble and were resolved to eliminate it. The Temps and The Journal des Débats, organs both of the armaments trust, shed crocodile tears at the sorrowful spectacle of a middle-class party like the Radicals making common cause with the Marxists, and lending themselves to "the propaganda and the maneuvers of the Muscovite fascists of the Left." The mongrels of the so-called *presse d'information* and the curs of the yellow press barked to the same tune in less elegant French. The Propaganda Bureau of the self-styled "national republicans" (who are nationalists, but neither national nor certainly republican) pasted the capital and the countryside with posters, which depicted Blum in the process of swallowing Herriot and finally Cachin devouring a somewhat groggy Blum. It did not take very well. It was a contribution of sorts to the gayety of a nation which had little to be merry about otherwise; but the strength and the solidarity of the Front Populaire, far from suffering, thrived on the silly lies. It went on gaining support at such a rate that its enemies were driven to try provocateur tactics. They sent their thugs down to Toulon and Brest during the arsenal strikes of last summer to provoke riots and bloodshed, and then dramatically asked the Radicals whether they, respectable citizens, were prepared to work together with the "parties of disorder" and countenance "revolution." That did disturb the unwary, but only for a day or two; and a parliamentary commission having investigated the trouble on the spot, the maneuver turned into a boomerang. Mussolini invaded Ethiopia, and the Left parties together with the vast majority of the people demanding the application of sanctions to restrain him, the tories, from being fire-eaters and sword-swallowers, suddenly became conscientious objectors and screamed that the Front Populaire, in its hatred of fascism, was plotting to drown the world in blood! Another boon for the joke-smiths and the *Chansonniers.*

The elections began to get distressingly close; still not a rift in the solid armor of the solid Left. The future, for the tories, loomed dark and desperate. In this conjuncture other tactics must be adopted. The masters of the country turned to two well-tried ones—the financial one, which had served them so faithfully in 1926, and the menace of civil war, which had given such marvelous results in Italy, Germany and elsewhere. Here, under the first head, is a sample from Figaro, organ of the tea-party fascists, signed by Lucien Romier:

> **The Bank of France, the government and Parliament keep on asserting that they are determined to maintain the franc at its present value. . . . To change their attitude it would require that they be, or that they appear to be, *forced,* by a *panic* of the people, which would result in bank withdrawals and a flight of capital, to decree a moratorium.**

And here is a specimen of aristocratic direct action, or threats thereof. Speaking at Caen the other day, Duke Pozzo di Borgo, right-hand man to Casimir de la Rocque, delivered himself thus:

> We are counting on this [electoral support of the nationalists] to stem the success of the Front Populaire. If it should none the less get control of the government, we must envisage a violent and extra-legal battle, and for this we must get ready forthwith.

The victory of the Front Populaire in Spain was a bitter blow to the reactionaries of every feather in France. But, being clever people, they soon saw a weapon in it with which to belabor the foe within the gate. The press, *grande* and not so grand, published so many false pictures of the happenings beyond the Pyrenees that the satirical weekly Le Canard Enchainé commented in its usually delectable fashion as follows: "The newspapers having exhausted their stock of photographs on hand portraying the riots in Madrid of a few years ago, the disturbances in Spain will be temporarily suspended."

But it was the latest stunt of Hitler that gave them their prize cue and revealed in the most dazzling light the stuff that superpatriotism is concocted of. The truth is that ever since the question of the Franco-Soviet Pact came on the carpet three years ago, the French oligarchy had determined its course. If France must choose between Nazism and Communism—between being annihilated by Hitler and being bolshevized by Stalin—then they, the two hundred families, voted unhesitatingly for Hitler. In all fairness, what could be more logical? Annihilation, in real terms, would merely mean a bit of a war, which is good for business, and afterwards the concentration camps and torture for workers, democrats, pacifists and such-like. Whereas bolshevization would spell ruin for big business, private control of industry and credit, and all privilege for the bigwigs. That is why Laval, having been obliged to sign the Pact, kept delaying its ratification while carrying on under-cover flirtations with the Wilhelmstrasse.

However, it was not till Hitler tore up the Treaty of Locarno and marched his troops into the Rhineland that his admirers came out into the open and declared their solidarity with him against their own beloved *patrie.* In recent issues of THE NEW MASSES editorial reference was made to the doings of such gentlemen as Louis Marin, ex-Minister, and Count du Pouget de Nadaillac, Croix de Feu. But they are not the only ones, by any manner of means. Listen to these super-patriots, whose letters to Hitler appear in a recent issue of The Voelkischer Beobachter. The first is from a French en-

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:r residing in the Department of rthe et Moselle. It reads:

It is with admiration that I have just heard u speak for an hour and a half at Karlsruhe . . applauding with the same enthusiasm as ur inspired 60,000 listeners the many passages your speech about the mutual respect of naons.

The other is from a Count (another!) de t de Villosandes who writes from

I pray God that the cause of justice may triumph, for it is the cause of the greatest and most honest of living statesmen, Chancellor Hitler.

Yes, yes, just like that. No fooling. ut these are perhaps demented individure then is the *pièce de résistance,* Front National," which if it does to have the importance the grannname suggests, consists neverthegroup of eminent and patriotic gentlemen, including the heads of the Fascist Solidarité Française and Jeunesses Patriotes, as well as the notorious ex-prefect of the Paris police, one of the leading putschists of '34, who stood ready to sacrifice Paris so that "France might live in honor and cleanliness." It says:

The fall of the Laval Cabinet, caused by the treachery of Herriot, has revived the war thirst of the Front Populaire and the freemasons.

Frenchmen, march to war to destroy fascism?

Frenchmen, march to war to defend the Soviets against Hitler?

Well, no, not quite yet!

Frenchmen will sacrifice all if their country is attacked. But for the coffers of the City or Wall Street first, and for the Soviets afterwards, *not a man, not a cent!*

Down with war-provoking sanctions!

M. P. E. Flandin and M. Paul-Boncour, you are the hostages of peace!

Imagine the howls of indignation from all the patrioteers if Communists or pacifists had thus openly preached mutiny to the army, rebellion to taxpayers and murder of ministers to anyone who had a taste for it! Small wonder that Herriot said the other day: "Now for the first time I begin to understand what happened in 1814 and 1815." But Herriot is understating things. The superpatriots were always like that. These signers of letters to Hitler, these bootlickers of foreign dictators when their privileges are threatened by the will of their own country's majority, have always acted like that. These proclamation spouters are the lineal descendants of the tories of 1792, who, while the first French Republic was encircled by the monarchs of Europe, gathered at Coblenz and offered their services to their country's foes, the defenders of their class-privileges. Spiritual descendants and physical ones, too. For among them already there was a Count de la Rocque, the forbear of the noble Casimir. We know the fate of the Coblentians of 1792. On April 26 and May 3 the French people have pronounced a like doom on those of 1936.

America's Biggest May Day

MICHAEL GOLD

NER Manhattan, dirty wasteland of skyscraper, slum and factory, blossomed overnight with scarlet banners. red, red—color of the pagan spring, of hope and revolution, bloomed amid ruel stone capitalist walls. More than lion people were in the streets in singcheering masses. The sun shone gaily; it was the greatest May Day we have celebrated in New York.

Around Washington Square, in Greenwich Village, thousands of sailors, tailors, housepainters and taxi drivers waited for the signal to march. The old Square rang with the Internationale, and Jack Reed, who had lived in one of these classic red-brick houses, should have been alive to rejoice in it all.

Macdougal Street: the "Vagabondia" restaurant, where "artists" play bridge and eat dinner. Above the basement cafe, some species of "artist" has a "studio" and exhibits his paintings" in the windows, mostly nude ung ladies coyly pulling up their socks.

Next to this symbolic exhibit of the senile ckness of art, waved a great banner of the lkan People's Federation; a grand cartoon s and brown that rushed like a strong the workers driving out kings, bankerals. It was a far better painting ically" than any exhibited by the bondia" diddler.

ears ago our May Day parades con- more than twenty or thirty thouchers. Last year there were 100,000 marche in line; all the races of New York, every a tion of working humanity that moves the wheels of Babylon.

But this year there were 300,000 in line! The parade was even more representative than 1935, nothing less than a new and rounded world. Socialists, Communists and trade unions had united for this parade. No longer did top-hats on the sidewalks point their canes at us and pooh-pooh the freaks. The bells don't ring so easily any more in the cash-register souls; and socialism has become a major force in New York.

There was the feeling of a new and irresistible power in this year's demonstration. Was it three or four years ago that the first seamen's delegation marched with us? There were then some three hundred of the husky lads in blue dungarees. We cheered the welcome recruits again and again. But this year there were no less than 1,500 seamen in the parade, a formidable regiment of strong fighting men. The crews of all the forty ships now on strike in this port marched under their union banners. Big Joe Curran, their leader, who looks like a figure out of a Jack London novel, was the seamen's marshal. They had built their own floats, telling the story of their fight against the belly-robbing, man-killing shipowners.

"You should count these, too!" *Ned Hilton.*

School teachers: there were some two thousand of them in line this year, a revelation of new forces. Three years ago there were no more than fifty teachers, I believe. Under the banner of the American Student Union, some five thousand students from every high school and college in greater New York also marched this year, an army of glorious youth.

How many writers, doctors, teachers or white-collar workers marched with the proletarians ten years ago? Perhaps a hundred isolated rebels. This year at least 20,000 of these "white-collar" members of the working class marched. No longer as individuals, but in strong, realistic organizations of their own: the Newspaper Guild, the Dancers' Union, the Artists' Union, the Pharmacists' Union, the Writers' Union, the Actors Equity, the Teachers' Union, the unions of office workers—and many more—yes, even delegation of the Ministers' Union and large group from the theological seminaries.

Look! there go the five thousand house painters who've just kicked out their rack-

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eteer leaders and put in an honest rank-and-file administration! They're happy because they have won their union back and can march on May Day; now they can begin to fight. "We Demand that the Health Department Protect All Workers," says one of their placards, on which is portrayed a painter with the spray gun that destroys him.

Here are the journeymen tailors, one of the oldest unions in New York, organized during the Civil War. Their old battle-scarred banner waves in the spring sunlight. There go the laundry workers! The barbers! The building-service employes! The doll-and-toy workers! Milk-wagon drivers! Hackies! Chinese waiters! Dental mechanics! Ladies' garment workers! Clothing cutters! Grocery salesmen! Cafeteria workers! Bookbinders, textile workers! Housewreckers, machinists, electricians! Longshoremen, bath-house rubbers, opticians! Furriers, world-war veterans —all of them union men, marching under their union banners.

It would need a catalog poem by some new Walt Whitman, page after page of vibrating names of all the kinds of work men do, a new and mighty Poem of Occupations, to begin to tell the full tale. Here was the eternal New York upon which Park Avenue and Wall Street are only the ephemeral parasites. Here was the real New York that the gagster snobs of the New Yorker never dare to think about. Here was honorable, strong, creative New York that will build skyscraper mansions for the soul of man! Here was New York's marvelous future!

And the marchers felt it on this May Day. The demonstration this year was the best organized we have yet had, its discipline that of an army of proud and conscious volunteers. For weeks the different organizations had prepared for it. There was a great deal of humor afoot and a carnival spirit—always a sign of proud strength.

The Furriers' Union, a union that I love for its constant courage and intelligence, had flung itself with ardor into the preparations. The art group of the fur workers painted almost a hundred big smashing cartoons that were scattered among the 12,000 marching furriers. Their drama circle had prepared tableaux on a score of floats, showing such scenes, for example, as a fur boss patting the head of a kneeling stool pigeon: "My Boss Likes Me, I Squeal on Everybody." "What a Fur Worker Thinks of Hearst and Hitler." "What a Fur Worker Thinks of War."

And the Irish Workers Club, holding aloft a portrait of the great labor martyr, James Connolly, stepped bravely behind their band of bagpipers dressed in the Scotch-Irish killibeg kilts.

The moving-picture machine operators, Local 306, had two sound trucks in the parade, through which they appealed for help against company unionism.

Twelve seamen in dungarees carried a big symbolic coffin, in which were seen sinking ships—"Remember the Morro Castle"—"This is how the shipowners give us safety at sea." On another float a worker with a great symbolic hammer labeled "Farmer-Labor Party" was smashing all the Wall Street tickers in the world. A Nazi swastika turned like a medieval torture wheel on another float and to it was bound the German working class. The banners on this float read, "Germany Is Not Hitler; Hitler Is Not Germany." There were over ten thousand German-American workers in the parade and as many Italians, all marching to show their hatred of the fascist butchers of their native lands.

The Red Builders, who sell The Daily Worker in subways and on windy streets, marched in bright decorated sweaters and chanted, "Don't Read Hearst! Read The Daily Worker!"

The Young People's Socialist League were applauded all along the line for their fine bearing and trim blue-and-red outfits. The food workers were also splendid in their white shirts, red sashes and trim white caps. They demanded equal rights for Negroes and a Farmer-Labor Party.

And here was the local of the Workers Alliance—thousands of jobless men and women, chanting, "Give the People Home Relief—We Want Jobs."

I must end this picture of May Day—it would take a small book to describe the

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floats, slogans, impressions, incidents, laughter, cheers—all this great pageant of a marching city of workers. Has anyone yet written a successful novel describing New York? It can't be done; it must always remain an aeroplane flight above an almost incomprehensible world of human life.

But a few great impressions remain to bind all this, a clue to the heart of this New York. The chief demand of this city marching on May Day was for a Farmer-Labor Party; and its two chief hates were Adolph Hitler and William Randolph Hearst.

Socialist and Communist marched together in unity for the first time to drive fascism out of New York and to make this a labor town.

And all the races of humanity marched together—this is the distinctive feature of a New York May Day, that makes it more interesting than that of any other city.

German and Jew marched side by side; Chinese and Japanese workers; Negro and white; Yankee and Latin American; Bulgarians and Greeks; Armenians and Turks; all the races the capitalists have pitted against each other in murder and hate walked hand in hand, comrades in the last war that humanity must wage, the class war.

This greatest of all May Days cast its shadows on many a cash-register soul in New York. But it gave the rest of us new and solid confidence. Fascism will be bitterly fought here; and New York is preparing itself to become very soon a 100-percent labor town.

The Ghost Goes Left

ROBERT FORSYTHE

Wanted: Experienced ghost writer to recast manuscript to extreme left. Basis of collaboration preferred. Box 733, c/o The Nation.

NATURALLY I've applied for the job, but I have a feeling there is going to be difficulty before the deal is completed. With that sixth sense which all left-wingers possess I know there is more behind the matter than meets the eye. People don't advertise in The Nation as glibly as that.

Consider the thing practically: the advertiser can't be a young man or woman because the young no longer require education in recasting manuscripts to the extreme Left. Quite the contrary, in truth. The task of radical editors is to lead the young into still waters. Otherwise they are writing material of such nature as to curdle the ink on the press.

That begins to narrow the matter down. It can't be a youth and there is every indication that it isn't merely a gentleman bent on breaking the tedium of bond selling by a venture into the arts. It may just possibly be an established author who has seen the light but doesn't know the road directions. Ellen Glasgow, Willa Cather, Edna Ferber, Peter B. Kyne, James Branch Cabell—Cabell isn't a bad guess. For years he has been getting increasingly daring. First he requested the world to forget that he had ever been called James. The reason for this was never clear, because there had been no reports of friends calling him Jim, but he wanted to be known henceforth as Branch Cabell. The tone of the advertisement also points to such as Mr. Cabell. Note the "basis of collaboration preferred." . . . The gentlemanly approach. He doesn't simply say "Wanted: Somebody to collaborate with me in recasting manuscript, etc.," but it is preferred. One can see the Master in his Richmond garden approaching his collaborator on the subject. "I have a little thing here," he will be saying humbly, "which I think will add to the class struggle, but it may need a bit of reorientation. I wonder if you would be so kind as to . . ."

Yes, it could be Cabell but there are other possibilities, including figures nearer home. From the first I've been suspicious. What does a clever culprit do when he seeks to throw the police off the scent? Does he flee to the open spaces? Not at all. He hides as close to the scene of the crime as possible. Does the possibility begin to dawn on you now? The advertisement appears in The Nation. There are writers on The Nation. Obviously they can't make a public plea such as "Wanted: Enlightenment about left-wing matters. Call Joseph Wood Krutch." But they might very well be looking intently every morning in Box 733 and then would come the meeting behind closed doors, the establishment of the collaboration and the final triumphant result.

Collaboration with Mr. Krutch would be difficult at best but it might be managed. It would be necessary to clear his head of years of nonsense but he is a pleasant fellow and the advertisement might mean that he had turned over a leaf and was prepared at last to fulfill his youthful promise. Just what sort of a book Krutch would be needing help on is a matter of importance. It could hardly be a book of essays because his mind is so grooved now in proving that everybody who reads Marx immediately becomes a bad writer that it would be a wrench of majestic proportions to get him out of it. A novel would be another matter and there I could help Joe. The characters would necessarily be a little Krutch-like in contour, with a great need for buxomness. The hero, as Joe would have him originally, would be a member of the faculty of the University of Tennessee and a man of some originality but little lust. Under my left guidance, of course, he would turn out to be Clark Gable and a whiz at dialectics. There would be little danger of going too far because Joe would still retain his feelings about the moronic character of all proletarians and the final characterization would be a compromise recast to the extreme Left.

There is the possibility that Mr. Krutch may already have been collaborating with somebody on The Nation. . . . That little girl who reviews books. . . . The female Studs Lonigan. . . . You know . . . McCaffrey, McGlatherty. . . . McCarthy! Mary McCarthy. Well, that *would* be a collaboration. Mary, Joe and I, with such incidental Van Dorens as might be around at the moment. Joe supplying the erudition, Mary the vitriol and Forsythe the genius—what a combination! It might be so brilliant that it would be necessary to recruit Edmund Wilson for a whiff of ennui.

The plot will need work and there will be some trouble with Miss McCarthy, who will prefer a fat hero if we have him lean, and vice versa, but that can be solved by the democratic procedure of keeping him lean and allowing Miss McCarthy to withdraw from the collaboration. For my own part, I shall confine myself to recasting. By the time Miss McCarthy has departed, I will have things in good shape. Since the hero is lean, this will flatter Mr. Krutch, who is not fat. Everything will be rosy until he insists on additional assistance and settles upon Herschel Brickell, who will contend immediately that unless the hero is a wraith there is no justification for considering him a proletarian. The Brickell theory is quite comprehensive: if the man can still walk, he should be grateful to capitalism. Handling Mr. Brickell will be a problem. I understand that personally he is a kindly person, but suffering from delusions. His particular theory is that since he has a job on The New York Evening Post, the world is in excellent condition. You really can't make a philosophy out of a thing like that. From this point on the collaboration, preferred, is going to become rockier. Educating Mr. Krutch during the course of a collaboration is task enough for one man; educating Brickell would be a career.

In fact, having reached this point, I feel worn out. Since it has been established by all God-fearing men that you can't change human nature, the upshot of the thing would undoubtedly be that Krutch, the critic, would annihilate Krutch, the left-wing novelist, thus winning The Nation award as the best liberal critic of the year. I get wearier and wearier as I think the thing over.

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American Artists Today

PETER BLUME

A FEW years ago, no one could ever have brought the artists of America together to discuss anything. There never was, in fact, a common basis on which many artists could get together. They would have been prejudiced against the idea of holding a congress to talk about esthetic problems, for instance, because they considered them a private matter for individual artists to solve for themselves. Yet that was about the only thing they could have found to talk about. As a class they were broken into mutually antagonistic little groups, each trying to defend its own interests.

The astonishing thing is that American artists have changed in the past five years. Their Congress Against War and Fascism would have been impossible before. Now they have come together, almost spontaneously, from every part of the country because they fear that their integrity as artists is being threatened and because they realize that their whole existence is tied up with the economic crisis of the entire world.

Many artists today, even in the face of these conditions, still view the fundamental problem with apathy and distrust. They consider themselves immune to the conditions in society. But as a matter of fact, all their peculiarities, their traditions, their general social outlook, are symptoms of how social conditions have molded them. Changes in the order of society have not only affected their style and technique, but have actually caused them to take sides in the economic struggle and to develop peculiar class prejudices.

The economic changes are clearly recorded in their work. The history of art and esthetics can be taken as a guide to the history of mankind, as everybody knows. If we had no other evidence of European civilization during the past 500 years, we could get a very good picture of this whole period through its art. It would give us not only a visual sense of how people lived, dressed, and were governed, but also the most subtle interpretations of how they thought and felt.

The artists were among the first to be affected by the change in the structure of society from feudalism to bourgeois aristocracy. The artists became individualistic and remote from the active world around them. Their whole function in society altered. Patronage was shifted from church to state to private individuals. The artists ceased to play a part as important vehicles for the communication of ideas, and became instead, decorators engaged to glorify the personal greatness of their patrons. They became utterly dependent on this class for their economic and artistic welfare.

For several centuries, in various corners of Europe, art followed the erratic course of business and trading activity. It flourished during prosperity and declined during business depressions. Under adverse economic conditions and wars whole schools became static or extinct. Art was a product of abundance, to be enjoyed by the few who could afford it. This transformation of a work of art from a part of a social system into a luxury product, exploited by wealthy individuals, has given art and the personality and tradition of the artist much of its present unearthly characteristic.

THE upheavals caused by the industrial revolution upset the precarious relationships the artist had with this class. The new economic forces that came in, completely changed the aspect of wealth. It developed entirely new symbols of power. The display of luxury became unnecessary.

The artists were left high and dry and abandoned, without anchorage anywhere. They had lost their privileged position and they became the misfits of society, maladjusted to its economic laws and hostile to its philosophy. The artists were forced to retreat to a cloistered world of their own—into a Bohemia, under cover of defiance, because they could not reconcile themselves to the new situation nor accept the prevailing philistine tastes and standards.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century an artist's greatness came to be measured not by his ability to express the ideals and aspirations of society, but in proportion to the cultural gap that existed between him and the standards of his time. To be in tune with the times was to be condemned to mediocrity; there was no way in which an original work of art could be made to fit into the scheme of things. Artists *were* misunderstood and their audience was progressively narrowed.

The artists became a peculiar spectacle—the spiritual exiles, hobos, in a materialistic world who wandered about in search of enduring truth. They scorned the idea of men finding their way to a better life through politics, for they were preoccupied only with the eternal qualities which no political circumstances could alter. They believed their art could function under any form of government.

The contradictions of this position soon became manifest. The artists had their own highly specialized set of values. The art they produced in an atmosphere of isolation became more introverted and more devoid of human meaning. They had shut themselves off from the world and now realized that they would have to find their way back into it again. They were weary of their own effeteness and they longed for some direction.

At this point they put themselves into a position which would have led them straight to fascism. They felt that a new social adjustment was imperative, but they were not in any way prepared to reconcile themselves to the people. Their prejudices against the philistine mob impelled them in the opposite direction. Instead of coming down to earth, they retreated into the dead past. They looked for something authentic and they finally found it in the idea of an "intellectual aristocracy." The function of this august body of dilettantes was to give the artists a criterion of values, to maintain, by their authority, a high cultural level and to arbitrate grave matters of esthetic dispute. The artists resolved that this was the only way out of the impasse that individualism had led them into.

They flirted with a whole variety of causes, such as humanism, monarchism and medievalism in an attempt to give their idea social plausibility. They felt that the authority and discipline necessary to maintain an intellectual aristocracy could be restored once more only through a rigid hierarchical system.

The prevailing motive of these systems was a hatred of democracy, as the leveler of culture and the root of all evil and a profound contempt for the masses as the despoilers of culture. These were causes artists could subscribe to and still remain aloof. They saw no paradox in the position they took against democracy. They simply argued that culture had to be concentrated in order to flourish.

This typically fascist idea of a large subject-class dominated by a highly civilized minority was enormously popular with the esthetes of the late 'twenties. The artists had become so anti-social that they would have been ready to accept all the tenets of fascism, though few of them were aware of its implications.

When the economic crash came, this elaborate scaffolding of ideas built upon their faith in a leisure-class culture collapsed. The artists didn't really descend from their Olympian heights and their ivory towers—*they were thrown out!* The depression helped to dispel their sacred illusions that they belonged to a privileged and sheltered class. Their low economic level was forced still lower. They found themselves side by side with the lowliest victims of the depression. It took more imagination than even artists possessed to cling to their old illusions of grandeur, in the midst of unemployment, breadlines and bank failures and what looked like the imminent fall of the whole economic system.

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We the artists could see now that we would have to reach out for a more honest and more solid social relationship. We were afforded a concrete example of how our old ideas worked out in real life—what a return to medievalism was like in a modern state—during the reign of terror, when the Nazis came into power in Germany. We could not remain complacent at the sight of a government persecuting its artists and sending them into exile and imprisonment. It shamed us to think of how near we once came to being fascists ourselves and how we had cherished a belief in the choice place we would have in an established aristocracy with its perfectly balanced social hierarchies.

We became aware of the threat of fascism as an international menace. We could see its economic impulses operating everywhere, under the stress of economic crisis; its brutality, its racial and religious prejudices parading under the flag of reaction. We recognized it as the real enemy of culture and we saw its portentous beginnings right here in the United States, in the violations of civil liberties, in acts of censorship and in the destruction of works of art.

We are aware that these violations of human liberties can no longer be minimized. These are not mere scarecrows invented by radical propagandists to mislead loyal Americans, but the recognizable symptoms of incipient fascism, increasing daily in frequency and boldness and condemned by every decent civil and religious organization in America.

We have called this Congress Against Fascism and War to discuss the threat that has arisen to our liberties and our future as artists and to add our weight in the united struggle against it. We know that there is no retreat for the artist, no ivory tower we can hide in for protection and no promise, for we have seen in the countries where fascism has triumphed, that our sensitivity will in no way be regarded. Fascism is a desperate method of making us mute automatons in a dying order. Fascism means the death of culture. We must oppose it now, or be destroyed by it. There remains no other choice.

A few years ago, the advent of fascism seemed inevitable. We now know that it cannot triumph against a united opposition; that fascism can be and has been stopped. The world we live in is a modern world, torn by opposing forces and moving with ever greater intensity and violence toward a crisis—a crisis culminating in fascism and war. We must fight against both for our own salvation. We, as artists, must take our places in this crisis on the side of growth and civilization, against barbarism and reaction and help to create a better social order.

No More Overcoats

KENNETH FEARING

HE wouldn't be here if he could get the money somewhere else. Maybe he doesn't think so, maybe the small guy in the torn leather jacket is telling himself, with silent volubility, that if Harry doesn't come across with the two bucks he knows a dozen places where they'll be glad to loan it to him, why, for that matter, he's got fifty friends who'd be glad to loan him five bucks, ten bucks. But if he thinks that, he's only kidding himself. He can't, without vastly greater expense of time, pride, or convenience, get the money anywhere else. Neither can any of the others in the small knot of people before the wire netting that lines the counter. Neither can you, that's why you know. And that's why, no matter how many times you've stood here in these drab and cramped premises lined with suitcases, fishing-rods, cameras, radios, phonographs, no matter how familiar you are with that odor of mothballs and the sound of ticking clocks, that's why you never quite get used to it, that's why you feel just like the undersized fellow in the leather jacket sounds as though he feels—anxious as hell and trying to sound confident—when he hands his parcel wrapped in newspaper through the wicket above the counter and Harry absently opens it.

"Couple of dollars until next Saturday, Harry?"

The voice, elaborately casual and friendly, was meant to be a simple declaration, but it came out, somehow, as a question. Harry looks down at the opened parcel. So do the rest of us. It contains a pair of shoes. Harry lifts one of the pair by its top and turns it over, dispassionately studies the heel, the sole, the toe. Then he inspects the other one, more briefly and sets them both down again among the papers that wrapped them. They are ready to go back to their owner, but Harry has no feeling about the matter at all. His even features are expressionless and his mild voice holds nothing but courtesy.

"Afraid I couldn't give you two dollars, Joe. A dollar be all right?"

Joe has already resigned himself, even as he argues.

"Couldn't make it a buck and a half, Harry? Get paid Saturday, I got to get'm out then."

The regret that tinges Harry's voice only doubles its finality.

"Afraid not, Joe. The soles're a little bit thin. A dollar all right?"

Relief fills Joe's loud and careless "O.K., Harry," as the loan is settled and Harry sweeps the shoes to a shelf beneath the counter, calls down to the white-haired man at the cash-register.

"A dollar for Mr. Martin." He gives Joe a fleeting smile. "That's right, isn't it?"

Joe expands, flattered at the recognition. "Joe Martin, sure. The one and only."

And the rest of us think, why did he have to have two dollars, or was that just a stall to raise the final price? But whoever goes to all that trouble for a dollar has to have it pretty bad and what did he want it for, food? Or did he dream about a number? And if he really wanted more than a dollar, how's he going to manage it, where's he going to get more? Or if those were his best shoes, and they probably were, with thin soles that made them worth only a dollar, what kind of shoes is he standing in now? Jesus, you probably couldn't give them away for junk. But nobody looks. By now we're watching Harry turning and turning the big gun-shaped thing handed through the wicket by the next man, a young and tall and muscular person in overalls. Harry looks at it, aimlessly tests the various gadgets, clumsily and vaguely passes a finger across the metal barrel of it, as though he had never in his life seen such a weird article before and hadn't the faintest idea of its purpose. But he fools you.

"What's this, chief?" The question is incurious, and, idly, he supplies his own answer. "It's an electric hand-drill, isn't it?"

The mechanic presses imperceptibly forward, fingers gripping the netting of the cage. His speech is precise, but faintly accented.

"Sure." He digs a hand into an overall pocket and brings out half a dozen slender steel rods. "Here's a steel drill, quarter inch and here's a grinder, a polisher, they all go with it, all these things."

He lays them on the counter as though confident he were unveiling a collection of world-famous gems, and Harry, ignoring them, briefly removes his eyes from the hand-drill to glance at a newcomer who enters bearing a winter overcoat under his arm. Harry's polite voice instantly halts him.

"No more overcoats. Sorry. We've already got more than we can handle."

The newcomer registers a towering contempt. As he bangs the door, departing, you notice that the loosely wrapped bundle of the man ahead of you, a city fireman, contains an overcoat. But he doesn't move and gives no sign he has heard.

"How much did you say you wanted on this, chief?"

The mechanic, who hadn't said what he

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wanted, hesitates. When he speaks his voice is strained, but positive.

"Fifteen dollars."

"Fifteen?" Harry is amused and incredulous. He lays the machine down among the drills, abandoning the whole matter. "About three dollars is the best I could give you on that." He turns and nods to the young woman who is next, extends his hand for the ticket she slides through the narrow gap between counter and cage. "Hello, Mary, how're things?"

Mary is there to redeem an article previously pledged, which means that Mary is now in the money, temporarily at least, which means that Mary's mood is just the opposite of that which grips the rest of us. Harry does some swift arithmetic on her pawnticket and exhibits the result.

"Five-forty."

It turns out to be a ring that Mary has pawned for five dollars. Of the forty cents charged for the loan, twenty-five is listed as a handling charge, fifteen as interest. That means eight percent for a month, or less than a month and if Mary hocks her ring with the methodical regularity you believe that she does, the annual interest rate is almost 100 percent. Not bad, not bad. Mary goes out and you are sure that she will be back with the same ring in exactly seven days. Harry looks at the mechanic, rigidly posted before the cage and seems to remember him.

"What d'you say, chief? Three dollars all right? Tell you what, I'll make it four."

The mechanic is excited, disclosing mixed indignation and anxiety.

"Say, you know what that costs? Those hand-drills, you can't get a hand-drill like that one for less than thirty-five dollars. Listen, that's a Universal."

Harry looks at the hand-drill without touching it.

"We've got a lot of these."

"Not like that one, not Universals. Bet your life you ain't."

"We have all kinds, more than we can use. Besides," Harry stares at the tool, seemingly depressed and making up his mind about it, "this looks like an old model, been used a lot, too." He shakes his head and you wonder, what does he know about it? Anything at all? Never mind, no matter how little he knows, the appraisal won't lay the firm open to loss. He gathers the drills and the tool, holds and weighs them tentatively in his hands. "Four dollars all right?"

The mechanic smoulders.

"By Christ I could better give them away. Make it ten dollars."

"Four dollars for the machine and a dollar for the drills. Five dollars on the lot, that's the very best I can offer you."

Harry lifts the tool and its accessories to the wicket and slides them through. The mechanic stares at his possessions without moving to receive them, as though they had suddenly become completely strange.

"All right," he says at last. "Five dollars."

As the ticket is being made out Harry nods to the fireman and lays the hand-drill aside, extends his hands for the fireman's bundle.

"How're you, Mac? What can I do for you?"

Mac the fireman replies in a tone of strenuous jocularity.

"My other service coat, Harry. I'd like five or six dollars on it."

Harry's face imperceptibly clouds as he receives the package and spreads out the coat.

"We've got an awful lot of overcoats, Mac. We really shouldn't take any more."

Mac's good spirits seemed undimmed and even replenished.

"I know, Harry, but I've got to get this out for inspection next Wednesday sure. See what I mean?"

"Sure, Mac."

Harry scans the sleeves, the elbows, the lapels of the coat's exterior, then briskly flips it, studies the lining. What's he thinking about? That he's the banker to the whole neighborhood? That everything in the world is a little worn, broken, old, fake? That people are fools and gamble or drink away Saturday's wages by the following Monday? That the insides of this dismal store have at one time or another stored practically every treasured household possession and every necessary work implement of everyone living within the radius of a long mile? Probably not. Probably he's wondering how his own salary is going to last until the end of the week.

Meanwhile, Mac's forced joviality goes on and on.

"How d'you like the Cubs for this year, Harry? Bet you five bucks on the Giants and give you odds."

"I haven't been following the Cubs, Mac, and I wouldn't bet anyway. What's the number on this, 11795?"

"That's right."

"It's worn off, a little," Harry bends his head to look again at the service number sewn into the coat and it's as though he were staring into Mac's soul. "Five dollars, did you say?"

"O.K., Harry. Say, how're you betting on the fight tonight? Ambie or Kaplan?"

Harry straightens, calls down the counter as he lays aside the coat.

"Five dollars for a service overcoat, George McPherson."

"What d'you say, Harry? I'm picking Ambie. You want to put five bucks on Kaplan?"

Harry smiles through the cage, remotely friendly.

"I never gamble, Mac."

He turns to you. All right, what've you got? How insignificant is it? Will he notice where it's old? What made you think it was worth anything in the first place? And if you can't get as much as you want here, where will you get it?

"Honest, Captain, someone gave them to me to hold."

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Our Readers' Forum

From a Crippled Vet

As a World War cripple, one who was severely wounded in action in Belleau Wood, in June, 1918, and a veteran with three brothers who have served under the flag, and forebears who were with the northern army in the Civil War, I want to protest with all my force and heat against the Tydings-McCormack and Russell-Kramer anti-sedition bills.

I am a native of the United States, born in Indiana and as such I believe I have a tradition of rebellion in my blood—that is, rebellion against tyranny of any sort. I am sure that if either or both of the mentioned bills are passed I shall not rest until I have violated both over and over, wilfully and openly. I shall certainly not cease criticizing all those forces and persons working for war, for large armaments, for use of troops against the laboring class, to which I belong and for the suppression of free belief, free speech, free assemblage. I shall certainly consider every congressman who votes for one or both of the above bills my personal enemy, the enemy of my class and an enemy of his country.

I reiterate: I protest the passage of the Tydings-McCormack and the Russell-Kramer anti-sedition bills.

Sioux City, Iowa. EARL B. DOUGLASS.

Rep. Blanton, Logician

April 17, 1936.

At 10:45 P.M. on the above date the Honorable Thomas L. Blanton, member of the House of Representatives from Texas, spoke on the topic, "The Teaching of Communism in Washington Schools." Although fully aware of his reputation as a die-hard reactionary, I was amazed at the extent of the calumny which he heaped upon everything liberal.

Any possible doubt that Mr. Blanton disregards the truth disappears when we examine that portion of his speech in which he compares Communist propaganda with the sort of thing practiced by the public utilities. Insidiously, he tries to capitalize on the public's scorn for the public utilities by showing that Communism makes use of the same materials! Columbia University has accepted endowments from public utilities, propagandists extraordinary. The Communists, too, are propagandists. Ergo, Columbia University is the slave of Moscow.

CHARLES VILLEFIN.

A Visit to Gov. Talmadge

When the Philadelphia Orchestra toured through Georgia recently, several of the boys decided that they would like to see Uncle Talmadge at close range. The boys were divided on the question of whether or not the Governor would deign to see them; and they bet three cigars on the outcome.

Well, he had them into his private office, all right, but they had to sit with hushed mouths for twenty minutes while a stout lady named Mrs. Jennings finished her job with the governor: she was reading his palm.

CLIFFORD ODETS.

Regenerating Pen-Prostitutes

In his article on Writing and Writers, Isidor Schneider says: "The writer without the capacity to communicate is as dead as a wire without current." No one will take issue with him on this point. But for him to assume that the mere act of turning leftward will find an audience for the writer is absurd.

Today, as Schneider points out, many writers are turning Left; but the unknown writers are finding it easier to break into the pulp magazines than into the rigidly critical left-wing publications. Over and over again the same established writers appear in the same radical magazines, practically barring entrance to the newcomer.

There is a great need today for the wide-open welcome of Jack Conroy's old Anvil. Maybe some of the stuff in the early revolutionary magazines was rotten, but the unknown writers were published and had an opportunity to develop.

Schneider politely calls the pulp writers prostitutes, but calling names does not alleviate the situation. Open up the radical press to the unknown writers and some of the incipient prostitutes at least will have an opportunity to regenerate themselves.

Washington, D. C. DEE BROWN.

Elsewhere in this issue there is an article, "Mass Writers Wanted," which partially answers the questions raised here. As for providing space for the hitherto unpublished writer, there are few issues of left magazines in which the work of new writers do not appear. Since its foundation, THE NEW MASSES has encouraged and published a number of young, unknown writers. It will continue to do so in the future.

Suppressed News Item

Did any of you read the news story of the dynamiting of the public road leading to Big Laurel College, a workers' school just started here on the edge of "Bloody Harlan" County, Kentucky? No—and there was a very good reason. While the story was sent out as a dispatch by the local news correspondent to all the papers serving this territory, not a line appeared in print. We went to court, and notwithstanding the fact that the road fenced up and dynamited by agents of the "Company" was a U. S. mail route, all we got were promises that the road would be repaired. But we have slashed down the fences and repaired the damage so that our library books and pamphlets may circulate through the coalfields of Southwestern Virginia and Eastern Kentucky. We need more books. We need cash for school expenses. We need clothes for our students and teachers.

Big Laurel, Va. NAOMI MULLINS.

Forgetting the Rich

Harold Ward in his article "Forget the Rich" suggested a most insidious danger to the middle class when he pointed out that the National Retail Dry Goods Association is a scheme of "big shot" merchants to pull the big dealers' chestnuts out of the fire and distract the small dealer from his own struggles.

Small dealers will certainly fall prey to fascist demagogy unless they keep always in mind that the middle class is itself divided into big fellows and little fellows. The larger middle-class dealer is just as much the enemy of the corner grocer as is J. P. Morgan or the Liberty League or the National City Bank. He will do just about as much to help the small dealer as any of these, and will make just as good a leader of a neighborhood stores association as, let us say, Mr. H. C. Hopson of Gas and Electric fame.

The big dealer not only is associated with the finance-capital set-up; often his business is owned by it. His credit is dependent on good footing with the banker, and his profits go up when his wages go down. Right here comes the sharp distinction between him and his small competitor; the little dealer runs his store with the assistance of members of his family, and perhaps a hired helper or two. A rise or fall in wages doesn't affect his costs appreciably, but a general wage slash will eat into the purchasing power of his customers. The big shot is out of pocket if his employes win wage demands. The fear of organized labor gives him insomnia. An increase of wages in his own store is too close to home and shuts out his view of the general benefits, in increased purchasing power, flowing ultimately from high wage levels in the community.

These wage slashers will be Benedict Arnold leaders of any small retailers' organization that fights for more purchasing power to customers. They will always be haunted by the ghost of wage demands in their own establishments.

It shouldn't be too hard to make the small dealers see that only one course of action will save them. First, they must have their own exclusive economic organizations under their own leadership. Membership should be strictly confined to their own ranks. Here and there some big shot may be found whose superior ethical sense makes him take a long-range view of things. If he is really so ethical and far-seeing, he will not complain if the small fellows look over his credentials very carefully, and demand to see how he reacts under fire, before they admit him to the leadership, or even to the ranks.

One other thing the small retailer, shopkeeper or proprietor needs: dependable allies. Self-employed people make up an almost negligible proportion of the whole population. Standing alone, they will be wiped out almost as quickly as if they follow the false leadership of their big competitors. Their biggest enemy is the small class of banker-industrialist-merchant prince monopolists, the crowd that is now engaged in an organized drive on the wage standards of the working class in order to maintain their own profits. These are the people who are strangling the small dealer by means of reduced credit, higher merchandise costs, exorbitant rents, unconscionable utility rates and monopolistic competition. They have nothing good to offer. Even as customers they hardly count, there are so few of them and they do most of their buying at the large stores.

The organized part of the working class is already giving battle to these big shots. The one sure way for the small dealer to save his skin is to join with the workers, the salaried people and the professionals to fight the common enemy on the economic and political fronts.

New York, N. Y. R. NORTON.

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(CONDUCTED OR INDEPENDENT)
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FOR PHYSICIANS AND DENTISTS
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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Mass Writers Wanted

IN A recently published essay the remarkable English revolutionary poet, C. Day Lewis, attempting a forecast of literary futures, keeps a place reserved, separate from literature as an art, for literature as "entertainment"—as if there were no entertaining classics, and as if the capitalist double standard of a real literature for the classes and a vulgarized literature for the masses were a normal and permanent division.

Edmund Wilson, in one of his recent I-Got-The-Blues-In-The-Soviet articles expressed fears for literature in the Soviet Union which, being a democracy, would leave mass hands free to pull down the level of culture. These examples are not isolated. I cite them here only to show the prevalence of the bourgeois theory of the guilt of the masses for the cultural crimes of the bourgeoisie. It circulates, as we see, as freely as ever in the minds even of sensitive intellectuals who are or have been labor sympathizers.

The very history of the word series, *vulgar, vulgarity, vulgarize, vulgarian,* etc., contains in essence this false convict record of the masses as the criminal against culture. The meaning of the Latin root of vulgar is *people* and through this use of it the people have been made a symbol of corrupt taste. It took the genius of Boccaccio and Dante in Italy and the religious and revolutionary passion of Wycliffe and the genius of Chaucer, in England, to create a living literature, in the "vulgate," the language of the people, and to rescue literature from its fate of being buried alive in the dead aristocratic Latin.

The masses have never had a chance for a comeback. Their very school readers have been studded with proverbs and epigrams against them signed by the classic writers of the exploiting classes in all periods. They have entered the culture of the capitalist system prejudged, with the verdict against them long ago pronounced and inscribed in tradition. Except for the small and struggling revolutionary journals, they have never had any representation in the press; for in no real sense do they buy their papers and magazines. They merely make a token payment for what has already been bought by the big advertisers. The contents of these magazines have as one of their primary functions to preserve in the masses confidence in the class system and a sense of their own inferiority.

Even today when we say the word "writers" we almost automatically exclude from consideration the writers in the mass circulation mediums. The traditional disrespect for the class for which they write is reflected in this disrespect for the writers. It is significant that apart from some valid literary considerations, writers gain prestige, like Dashiell Hammett and Ring Lardner, when their work reaches the upper classes, and conversely sacrifice prestige when they enter the popular magazine field.

As a result, numerous writers use two names and have double literary personalities. They are the good Dr. Jekyll in their books and the bad Mr. Hyde in their popular magazine pieces. This schizophrenia, this split personality, is common not only to literature, but to every honorable human activity; and not only to writers, but to all who find themselves with one half of their mind and will doing one thing for business reasons, and with the other half doing another thing in spite of good business reasons. As a result, this schizophrenia has become among culture producers of all sorts so common as to seem normal, like goitre in iodine-poor mountain districts.

What I have written above has been prompted by letters that have come to me from writers and readers, some of whom apparently assume that the monstrous double standard of capitalist culture, the unwholesome and unnatural division into a good literature segregated from the masses and a popular literature, designedly and professionally bad, produced for the masses, must always exist.

Some other letters, especially those from young writers, sound a defeatist note. They say they want to be revolutionary writers, but they want above all to be effective. The existing revolutionary journals do not have the technique of the popular magazines, do not know how to reach the masses. They say, since we do not reach the masses by our printed word, we will give up the printed word. We will go instead among the masses as organizers.

But the printed word is one of our best organizing tools and its natural wielders must not lay it down. One of the handicaps to the advance of the labor movement has been the lack of skilled writers capable of presenting Marxist principles in inviting popular language and of using Marxian insights in creative literature. On the other hand these writers seriously underrate the influence of the literature of the labor movement, which has made up for lack of skill and poverty of media, by the force of its truth and the fire of its conviction. Hearst would not be doubling and redoubling the doses of his literary drugs to the masses if our literature were ineffective.

At this moment, especially, it is hard to condone a defeatist attitude. At this moment, with the United Front movement strengthening, with the evolving life form of a Farmer-Labor Party visible, with the masses in motion and accessible to us as they have not been in generations, it would be as mistaken for a writer to stop writing as for an organizer to leave his post.

But even from the point of view of mass circulation already within our grasp we are hardly in a hopeless position. The Sunday Worker already has 100,000. Magazines like Woman Today and The Fight Against War and Fascism are using mass magazine technique with great skill and have a clear future as mass mediums. THE NEW MASSES reaches many readers in the middle class, the working class and professional groups. While capitalist bookstore chains have gone into bankruptcy, the workers' bookshops have increased in numbers all over the country and in volume of distribution. In pamphlet publication another way has been found of reaching the masses. And in addition to all these a publishing house is soon to be launched specializing in literature with a mass appeal. The foundations therefore for an independent literature for the masses are being laid; here is the young writer's and every writer's opportunity.

By the evidence of the names already to be seen under stories and articles in The Sunday Worker, Fight, Woman Today and other independent magazines we may expect to win over a contingent of popular writers as we have won over numerous writers of the middle-class, liberal and "quality" magazines. We will have the use of their talent and training in reaching the masses. There is even a raising of questions now as to possible dangers in the use of their techniques.

I think there is such a danger but it lies, in my opinion, not in the techniques that may be carried over, but in the attitudes of mind that may be carried over. If popular writers bring with them, in any form, hangovers of the vicious capitalist exploitational concept of the average man as moron, then

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there will be dangers as well as advantages in their coming over. If they think their new task will be to fool dumb-bells in the good cause rather than in the cause of the big advertisers, then they will come to us with questionable gifts.

In the matter of technique there is no danger probably except in such devices as derive from the notion of the natural and inevitable gullibility of the masses. What makes the bulk of the stuff in the popular magazines bad writing is not its literary devices which, in most instances, are applications of sound principles of craftsmanship, but those devices used in violation of truth to twist the material to the Hearst and Macfadden mental moulds. It is this that spoils the product and robotizes the producers. Such devices are of no value to us, and if writers have any notions that there are "useful" illusions in the revolutionary movement to which they can apply the cunning practised in the service of trade illusions, then they will be dangerous friends. Our potential audience, like our existing audience, are the aroused sections of the workers. They must have the respect of the writers who write for them and that respect will make popular literature respectable. In that way our mass writers will serve, among other useful functions, as a curative for literature's present capitalist disease of split personality. It will be a step toward obliterating class lines here as in other fields where the revolutionary movement is in action.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

The Missionary Trail

THE EXILE, Pearl Buck. Reynal and Hitchcock. $2.50.

TO ONE who first discovered Pearl Buck in that powerful novel *The Good Earth* and followed her through the other volumes of the trilogy describing three generations of a Chinese family, *The Exile* comes at first as a disappointment. This story of the author's own mother, an American living in "exile" as a missionary's wife in China, is both slighter, less dramatic and less clear of line than the story of the Wangs.

It is as if the author were too near to the material emotionally to be able quite to master it intellectually. Even the style is affected. It has the rambling simplicity of a long letter or monologue which dips suddenly into a subject and then embroiders with afterthoughts, not the sophisticated simplicity of a sharply developing drama attained by elimination of the non-essential. Yet at the end, for all the rambling style and slightness of development—perhaps in part even because of these qualities—the personality of Carie, the mother, emerges perhaps less clear as a type than the peasant Wang, but more real as a human being, as real, as bewildered, as complex as the human beings one has always known.

Carie was one of those many agents of what some people call civilization and others call imperialism, who thrust themselves and their ways of living and thinking upon the so-called backward lands. The economist or historian describes the function of these intruders in undermining with their trade goods or their alien ideas the structure of ancient societies. Pearl Buck, as novelist, sees rather the inner motivation that keeps them through a whole lifetime of turmoil and tragedy faithfully serving an end which they never understand.

In Pearl Buck's mother and father the motive was religious. For the father it was a confident fanaticism which felt the call to seek out the most difficult regions for the saving of human souls. The mother's personality was more complex; her religion was composed of a whole series of childhood pressures ending in a vow at a mother's deathbed. She dedicated her life to a God of whom she never was able to become clearly conscious, whom she always sought but never fully believed.

To the demands of such a God expressed through her missionary husband she sacrificed her deepest human cravings. She bore children under harsh conditions in an alien country and lost them through the diseases of backward populations over whose sanitary methods she had no control. She lived out her life surrounded by a Chinese world of which she never became a part. Always to the end her longing went back to the hills of West Virginia which remained through a whole lifetime of exile her spiritual home. And after all this sacrifice in the name of religion, when she heard on her deathbed a victrola record "O rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him," she said with quiet bitterness: "Take that away. I have waited and patiently—for nothing."

The picture that remains is that of a good and lovable human being frustrated by religion, a divided personality taught to reverence as the highest good a way of life which her whole being felt as the way of death. How much kindness, how much loveliness, how much striving for goodness there is in human beings, the author seems to say and how tragically it is thwarted and brought to futility by the imposition of confused and alien ideals.

The author feels strongly the bitter tyranny of religion from which her own life has suffered. Yet she herself escapes from it into an idealism more modern but hardly less confused, the ideal of Americanism. What justified for the daughter her mother's life, was the persistence which kept her to the end still infinitely American under whatever change of Chinese skies. The lifelong struggle for white ruffled muslin curtains, for modern plumbing, for an American garden becomes to the author not only admirable, as no doubt it is, but actually holy. She blesses her mother chiefly for having preserved in the minds of children born in China the high vision of an ideal America as unreal as the golden streets of her father's Paradise. America is always kind, good, wholesome; even when American sailor-boys patronize a Chinese brothel it is "Oriental" vice, while their seduction by Carie's home-made cakes and motherly tea-parties is "a bit of America." It is not surprising that when Carie eventually visits her West Virginia she finds herself no longer at home in "her America" and returns to her Chinese work.

A few of her readers will insist on remaining conscious that outside the persist-

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ently planted American garden there were great Chinese populations whose life was seen by the American exile as chiefly degradation and dirt. These people come into the book very seldom and only as background—famine, flood, pestilence, misery—against which Carie strives to maintain and to glorify her American life. She is kind to the Chinese; she longs to help them; she teaches young girls to read and talks to groups of women who listen to her strange ideals with "their mouths open and their eyes dreaming." For it was her function as it was the function of her husband to inflame an alien folk with hopes which they could never realize, except through ruthless struggles in which she would have been the last to participate. The old China hands who hated the missionaries as spreaders of sedition and the modern revolutionaries who hate them as intruders spreading religious opium are both of them wrong and right, if properly dated. The bitter wind of longing, which gentle souls like Carie stirred, helped in the end to fan the flame of revolution.

ANNA LOUISE STRONG.

Babel in the Ivory Tower

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY TODAY AND TOMORROW, edited by Horace M. Kallen and Sidney Hook. Lee Furman, Inc. $3.75.

THIS, the editors tell us, is a collection of philosophic self-portraits by representative American philosophers who have not previously published their intellectual confessions. Twenty-five teachers and writers who profess philosophy fill out the volume with what the editors call "a faithful picture of the struggle of ideas and ideals in American life upon the plane of philosophy." Few traditional philosophic subjects are excluded. Ethics, metaphysics, logic, social and educational philosophy are all treated—in the traditional manner, with the lingering nonsense and "pregnant ambiguities" of the ages.

To Irwin Edman, Horace Kallen, Michael Williams, Paul Weiss, T. V. Smith and many others, philosophy consists of imaginative and speculative hypotheses which will awaken poetic visions of the universe. Edman is overawed by the poetic possibilities of philosophic flight and expresses himself in a burst of song which, with regrettable success, echoes the lyric obscurity of Santayana. Edman confesses that he finds "extraordinary liberation" in the thought that Nature is the "matrix and source of all we can hope and believe and think and dream and do," and winds up throwing kisses to Reality and the Good Life. Horace M. Kallen, too, is sure that every philosophy is born a lyric. Santayana is the father of much of Mr. Kallen's lyricism also, but Kallen is nursing his adopted children in his own way. The central issue in present day philosophy, he says, is Individualism vs. Totalitarianism (the last is inclusive of both fascism and Communism) and he offers the following to supplement the decalogue:

> Live and let live!
> Give everything and everybody a chance!
> Don't set up norms; wait for results and then —classify them!

Paul Weiss's article about Life, Reality, A Priori and Final Cause is a nightmare of nonsense featuring such bright remarks as "to be is to transcend" and "inquiring is a mode of becoming." Weiss's last sentence "our world is too miraculously concatenated for a miracle to have made it possible" reveals the intensive and extensive stupidity of the traditional metaphysician. Herbert W. Schneider, Columbia professor, packs a volume of prolixities into his ten easily forgotten pages. Toward the end occurs a sentence which seems clear, in part. He says that he has been stating a theory which will refute both anarchism and totalitarianism. This reviewer could find no evidence for or against this assertion.

These examples are adequate to convey the tone and content of most of the essays. The picture presented by this volume is "faithful" all right—this *is* American philosophy as preached and practiced in the schools. If the reader wishes further poetic inspiration he may find it in the contributions of Michael Williams, editor of The Commonweal, Moses J. Aronson of C.C.N.Y., Will Durant of Notoriety Street, Ralph Tyler Flewelling and T. V. Smith.

To anyone who is not awed by the unintelligible it is clear that there is little connection between "American life" and this "plane of philosophy." Here and there, it is true, a philosopher dips into the bog of economic misery that surrounds us; but he is quick to return to his philosophic perch to breathe purer air, for the most part in the reader's direction. Thus, for example, Harry Todd Costello states that there is a "constructive" way out of our economic ills if someone only had the wit to find it. Mr. Costello does not think the "wit" will be forthcoming. Anyhow, he says, if we look at two hundred years ago with all its ugliness and brutality and stink, "I think we might be glad to come back again to the spacious light and promise of America." A few of the others are not quite as evasively sanguine as Mr. Costello. Ernest Sutherland Bates, Harry Overstreet and Ernest Nagel see that the social and economic system we live under is increasingly unbearable. War preparations, jingoism, nationalism, xenophobia and anti-Red hysteria are intensifying about us, stirring a few philosophers from their ivoried smugness and complacency. Those familiar with the history of American philosophy may feel that even such casual and isolated descents into the ugly world of economic reality show a great improvement over the prevailing philosophic attitudes of the last century when huge idealistic contraptions were imported from Europe to dictate that what should be, is. It is true that some of these men are "depression philosophers" who have been hit hard by the facts which have forced them to glance, occasionally, at their feet. These men survey the social and economic scene with disapproval and even despair. This is doubtless a great concession from philosophy.

But beyond a few scattered contributors who recognize that there is economic misery and that it needs to be remedied or else—there is nothing. No one, no one at all makes the slightest attempt to uncover the causes of economic insecurity, to examine the basis for imperialism and war drives, for this world-gone-mad depression we are facing. Those who deign to suggest solutions pluck them out of thin air, like Bode and Overstreet who urge us to reeducate our professors. Sidney Hook who has been touted—largely by himself—as a great social philosopher, takes this opportunity to dodge every vital issue in American life. In anticipation of a lay audience he writes, of all things, an autobiography of his intellect. He tells how he became perturbed by Berkeley, how he became a very good logician and pestered his friends by showing up the fallacies in their everyday speech. Then—metaphysics, epistemology, and finally John Dewey, showing that in general Karl Marx and John Dewey are really Sidney Hook.

There is no adequate apology for so barren a volume as this. For obvious reasons, it has created no interest. It arrived stillborn from the press. Let us not linger over the obsequies.

H. N. FAIRCHILD.

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A Social Laboratory

THE HERITAGE OF THE BOUNTY: The Story of Pitcairn Island Through Six Generations, by Harry L. Shapiro. Illustrated. Simon & Schuster. $3.

TOWARD the end of the eighteenth century The Bounty, an English ship, sailed to Tahiti to collect breadfruit which the English planned to introduce as a food staple in their tropical colonies, hoping thereby to lower plantation management costs. At Tahiti the potting and loading of the plants took several months during which the sailors, forming connections with native women, came to regard the island as a paradise. On the return voyage the crew, contrasting the past idyll with the harsh present reality—they were being ill treated—mutinied, set the officers adrift and sailed back to Tahiti. Fearing that a man-of-war would be sent to catch them the majority went searching the broad Pacific for an uninhabited island on which they could make a safe settlement. They decided on harborless Pitcairn Island which, if attacked, could easily be held against landing parties.

The settlers included less than a score of white men, six male Tahitians and a Tahitian wife for each. The land was divided up among the whites. The Tahitian men were enslaved and so abused that they rose and murdered several of the masters. There followed a massacre of the Tahitian men. Through later fighting between the white survivors and various other forms of mortality the settlement was reduced to one white man in a community of Tahitian women and half-breed children. The community multiplied. Its isolated position made it an ideal spot for anthropological study, especially of the effects of miscegenation and inbreeding. The verdict would seem to be that miscegenation is valuable as a refreshment of racial stock and that inbreeding is without harm where no bad heritable traits exist.

Harry L. Shapiro's study, a model of scientific narrative, has other values. Though sociological and economic factors are subordinated and though there is not a breath of conscious Marxism in the book, there is enough in his clear, objective presentation of this chance human laboratory to indicate how socialized forms develop out of natural necessity. The sailors arrived with the good capitalist doctrine of grab and withhold. It led them to self-destruction. Their heirs, starting out with that handicap at a minimum, adjusted their life on a comparatively cooperative basis. Part of the land was held in common; and where the instruments of production involved more than one user, as in the case of the fishing boats, they became community possessions. Mr. Shapiro tells how after its bloody beginning the island society became famous for its harmony and quiet happiness. He seems to credit this, in large part, to the religious and moral teachings imparted by the penitent, last white survivor and faithfully continued after his death. Perhaps the major credit should rather be given to the new forms of productive and property relationships. I. EASTFIELD.

The Millionaires' Mite

WEALTH AND CULTURE: A Study of 100 Foundations and Community Trusts and Their Operations During the Decade 1921-1930, by Eduard C. Lindeman. New York, Harcourt, Brace & Co. $3.

FROM this painstaking but far from adequate monograph on the workings of American philanthropy it is possible to obtain a fleeting glimpse of the numerous ways in which big business has invaded every corner of our social and cultural life. Mr. Lindeman's "initial report," while sedulously avoiding the deeper-lying factors of ownership, control, sources of wealth and ramifications of interlocking directorates, presents a variety of general findings that are worth knowing. For example, in ten years these 100 foundations expended, in all ten categories given, a trifle over $500,000,000; little enough return to the society from which their predatory founders extracted so many billions in surplus value. Of the 400-odd trustees whose occupations are known, 77 percent are in law, finance, commerce and industry, with a sprinkling of college and university administrators: only 6.7 percent are rated as scientists—and only two as social scientists. Most of these trustees, it seems, graduated from Harvard, with Yale (alma mater of some of the inner group on *Time and Fortune* magazines), a close second, followed by Princeton and Columbia while each of them belonged to an average of six of the most exclusive and snobbish upper-class clubs in the country. When you learn, further, that in the four years 1927, '29, '31 and '33, only six percent of the $11,500,000,000 probated and appraised was bequeathed by testators to others than friends and relatives, you begin to understand the joker in this business of "private relief" to which Roosevelt, the "great humanitarian" is prepared to consign that 75 percent of the American people who own virtually nothing. Lindeman's book, although only half a loaf, is well worth digesting. HAROLD WARD.

Hearst Psychoanalyzed

HEARST: LORD OF SAN SIMEON, by Oliver Carlson and Ernest Sutherland Bates. The Viking Press. $3.

HERE is the third biography of Hearst published within three months. Following Lundberg's *Imperial Hearst* by a few weeks, the Bates-Carlson book must inevitably be compared with it.

Extremely readable, treating more extensively of Hearst's Hollywood interests and personal life, the present work nevertheless presents little that is now new. Moreover, the "psychological" interpretation projected by Bates and Carlson has its pitfalls. To attribute Hearst hostility to the British to early snubs by British aristocrats does not seem so plausible as Lundberg's explanation: the struggle against English interests for Peruvian mine property concessions. The same criticism may be made of the Bates-Carlson explanation of Hearst's early opposition to American participation in the World War. Similarly, the "inferiority complex," from which the authors claim Hearst suffers, may explain many things; but the power-plus-profit-drive accounts for other, more important matters as Lundberg holds.

Altogether, *Imperial Hearst* is the more satisfying of the two volumes. It has dug into Hearst's financial and political career and the exploitation of labor on his newspaper and mine properties.

HY KRAVIF.

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Music

The A.F.M. and the Broadcasters

THE radio systems have been quietly engaged in an attempt to dominate the entire entertainment field in America. Not content with the profits that accrue from the broadcasting of commercial programs, the two leading chains, NBC and CBS, set up booking offices to control the activities of all the leading artists and orchestras. The monopoly which the Columbia Concerts Corporation and the NBC Artists Service possess in the concert field is already too well known for mention, but the extent of the broadcasters' domination of popular music and its makers has not been so well publicized.

Inasmuch as entertainers and dance orchestras are dependent on broadcasting for the making of their reputations, the radio artists' bureaus have had an enormous advantage over outside competitors in the booking of talent. It has been a time-honored practice for them to offer bands to spots fortunate enough to have regular air-time at a price often less than union scale. The bands were willing to work at pitifully small salaries for the chance at the precious air channels and as a result the two booking offices were becoming an increasing menace to the musicians and artists of the country. Orchestra leaders affiliated with prominent competing agencies were frankly told that they would be given no "sustaining" periods unless they changed managers.

The threat to the musicians' unions was obvious, for if the radio chains were to monopolize booking as well as broadcasting they would control all the country's entertainment and be in a position to tell unions exactly where to get off. Belatedly the American Federation of Musicians realized its danger and began proceedings to protect its members. Starting on January 1, 1936, the A.F.M. instituted a licensing agreement with all firms dealing in popular entertainment. Only firms bearing an A.F.M. franchise can engage in the booking of union musicians and the consequent protection of the men from chiselers is something epochal in American music.

Proving that they meant business, the A.F.M. has already revoked the licenses of both the Columbia Broadcasting System and National Broadcasting Company's artist bureaus, as well as those of countless smaller radio stations. It will presumably be easier for worthy orchestras to secure broadcasting time regardless of affiliation, although the agreement by which the Music Corporation of America, the largest independent booker of orchestras in the country, took over the defunct C.B.S. agency may lead to many of the same abuses as heretofore. M.C.A. bands, it is said, must now pay an extra two and a half percent commission for the privilege of preferred time on the Columbia chain, which strikes us as being something the Federal Communications Commission might well investigate.

The license agreement has also given the A.F.M. real power to deal with the abuses other managers indulge in. Rockwell-O'Keefe, whose license was revoked and then restored last week, must give up its little racket of incorporating bands so that they can get more than a just share of receipts. In the future, managers may collect only commissions, as they do in England; they may no longer own attractions, if the new union laws are to be strictly observed. This will certainly be a blessing for the many exploited Negro orchestras.

HENRY JOHNSON.

New Records

The second volume of the *Bach Brandenburg Concertos* (Columbia Set 250) played by Adolf Busch and a superb chamber orchestra comprises the Fifth and Sixth concertos. Inspired as the playing is, the album is not quite so satisfactory as the first. The use of piano instead of cembalo in the Fifth would seem to be entirely unnecessary, even though Rudolf Serkin is a great and sensitive artist. For basis of comparison we suggest that the real lover of Bach purchase the superb cembalo cadenza played by Franz Rupp on the Brunswick-Polydor version by the Berlin Philharmonic under Melichar (Brunswick 90404). Not only does Rupp clearly demonstrate that the cembalo is the only satisfactory instrument; he plays with a vitality and rhythmic certainty far superior to Serkin, who is inclined to romanticize. Outside of the cadenza, however, the Busch version of the Fifth is infinitely superior to either the Cortot on Victor or the Berlin Philharmonic. For some strange reason the *Sixth Concerto* has always appealed to me less than any of the others, although the Busch performance almost converts me to another view.

Columbia's first recordings by the young violinist, Nathan Milstein, accurately reflect all the virtues and defects he exhibits in concert. His technique and tone are almost on a par with Heifetz, but he is not as yet an artist of any unusual depth. His recording on the other side of the Vitali *Chaconne* of the Adagio from Bach's solo *Sonata in G Minor* lacks not only understanding but virility. It is a pity for Milstein that in the same company's catalog there is a recording of the work by Szigeti.

There is regrettably no space for further record reviews this week, but before closing I would like to mention that I have at last found a reasonably satisfactory straight electric phonograph (alternating current only) at a price in the neighborhood of $30. The motor is sturdy, tone comparable to most commercial machines at double the price, the speaker an eight-inch dynamic with a three-tube amplifier. It is a table model with a top that may be closed during playing of records, and may be heard at Bloomfield's. If readers wish any information about machines I will be glad to help them out by mail.

H. J.

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Between Ourselves

THE Editors and Staff of THE NEW MASSES have invited readers to a party welcoming Joshua Kunitz, our Moscow correspondent, who has arrived in New York for a short stay prior to his return to the Soviet Union. The party will be held on Wednesday evening, May 27, at Webster Manor (125 East 11th Street, New York).

It will not be just a party but "a party and a talk." Joshua Kunitz will speak on the controversy centering around the recent criticisms of Shostakovich's music, a controversy which seems to have stirred the interest of Americans more than any other cultural event in recent Soviet history.

There will be a question period, of course, as well as dancing and refreshments. Tickets are on sale at THE NEW MASSES office and the Workers' Bookshop at 50 East 13th Street.

Alter Brody, whose article on Palestine appears in this issue, is chiefly known for his poems, plays and stories on Jewish themes.

A. B. Magil, whose articles have appeared in THE NEW MASSES, will participate in a symposium on "Vital Issues Facing America," to take place on the evening of May 8 at the Hotel Delano (108 West 43rd Street, New York).

We have received to date nearly a thousand protests from NEW MASSES readers against the two sedition bills now threatening the American people—the Tydings-McCormack bill, which would make it a crime to criticize militarism; and the Russell-Kramer bill, which would prevent anyone from expressing any opinion distasteful to America's fascists.

As we have explained previously, the protests have been forwarded to Washington; but far more than the number we have received will be required to block the passage of these repressive legislative proposals. Once more we urge our readers to do everything within their power toward building a strong protest campaign.

An anthology to be called *Contemporary American Men Poets* is announced for publication by Henry Harrison, who is anxious to present proletarian poets.

Thomas del Vecchio, the editor, invites every poet whose work has appeared in THE NEW MASSES, to contribute eight poems. There is no limit to length. No poems appearing in any other anthology are eligible. Material should be sent to the editor at 430 Sixth Avenue, New York.

The New York City Council of the American Youth Congress has called a state regional conference of all youth groups for May 9 and 10.

At the May 9 session leading spokesmen for the major political parties will participate in a symposium on "Political Parties and Youth—1936."

At the May 10 session there will be extended analyses of such matters as "Youth in Industry," "War, Peace and Fascism," "Unemployment and Social Insurance," "Interracial Problems," "Education and Recreation." Youth groups of all kinds will be represented from schools, factories, farms, Y.M.C.A.'s, Y.W.C.A.'s, churches, fraternal groups, etc. All young people's organizations are invited to attend. (Place: Stuyvesant High School, 15th Street and First Avenue.)

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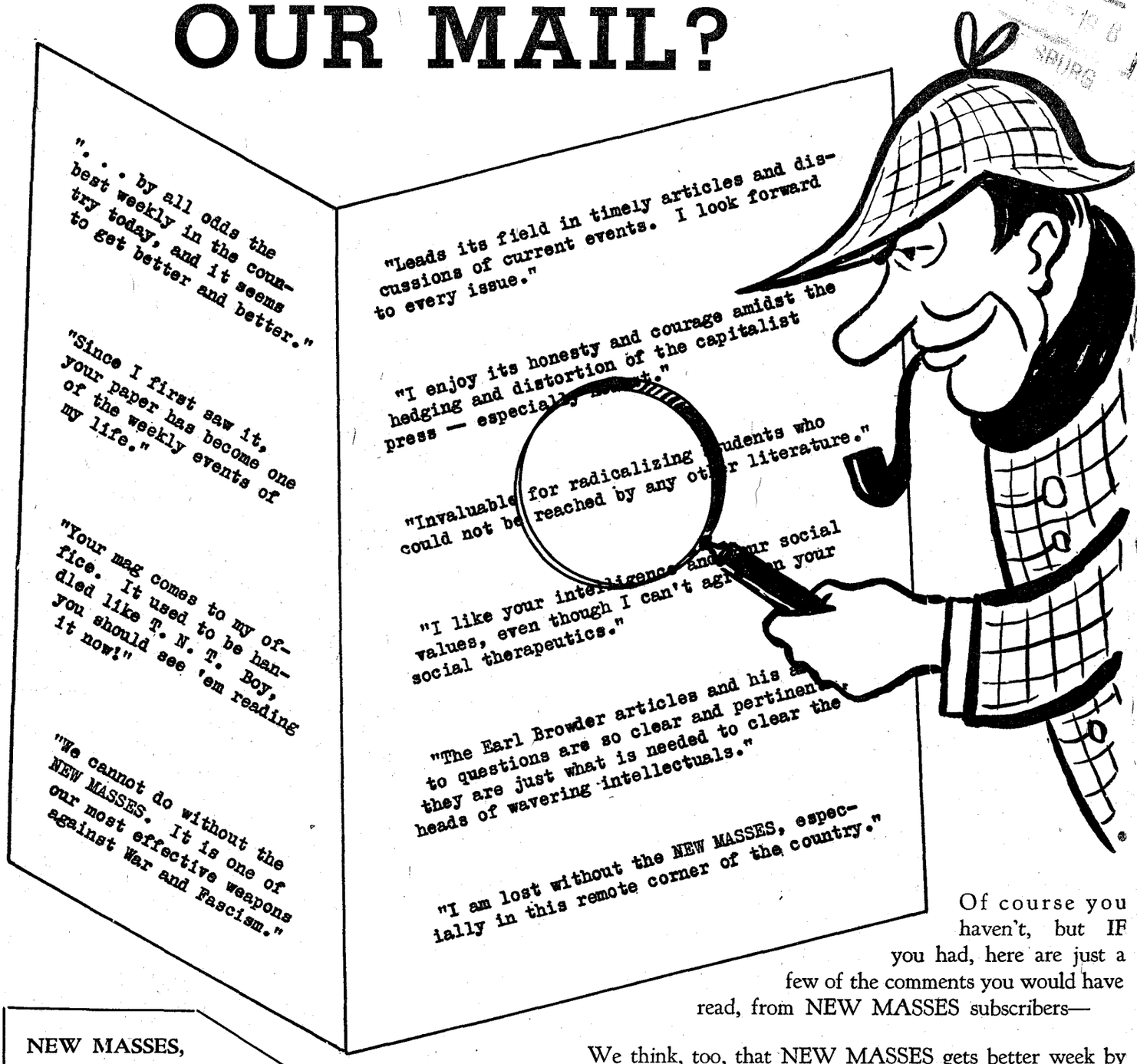
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